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Chart Gem, 2006
amethyst, saphires, spinels, diamonds, egg shell
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Pearl Corn Cob, 2008
Chinese freshwater pearls, 18k gold wire, 24k gold leaf, corncob, human hair
14 x 10 x 3"
PHOTO: JOHN BIGELOW TAYLOR
(See Feature p. 38)

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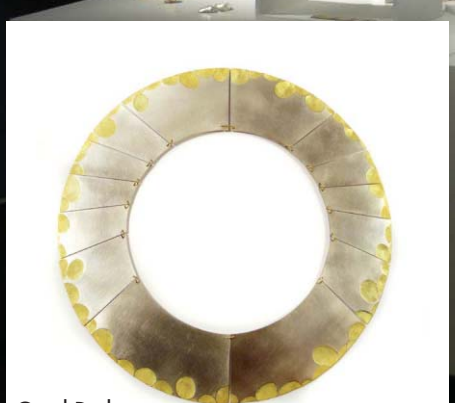

Gerd Rothmann
"Gold Gerwordene Abdüke"

Photo: Ornamentum at Design Miami / Basel, Switzerland 2011

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DEATH OCCASIONS A reflection on life. When someone passes away, we are left to ponder basic questions of existence: What does it mean to be alive? What is it to be, or no longer to be? What, if anything, remains after we die?

This issue of *Metalsmith* features work by two recently deceased contributors: Polly Ulrich, author of "The Hand as Subject and Site," and the jeweler Lily Yung, whose retrospective is covered in Reviews. While this magazine often focuses on the work of late artists, the fresh and unexpected loss of Ullrich, in particular, has prompted thoughts on life's elusive boundaries.

Ullrich died in a car accident in July; this essay would be her last. Poignantly, it ruminates on the very nature of being alive in this world, and on jewelry's role in keeping us engaged and present in our own lived experience. "Jewelry circumnavigates through the world as it is worn and displayed; it transmits corporality by pushing the maker, the wearer and the viewer into noticing their bodies entwined in a physical experience of space," Ullrich writes. "Jewelry, therefore, establishes an opening in the world that merges existence and action." This article, and its deep philosophical probing of the porosity of human relations, embodies Ullrich's genuine quest for a greater understanding through her writing.

Similarly for cover artist John Hatleberg, seemingly inanimate objects–gems, minerals, fossils–stir him to marvel at life's bounty. According to writer Andrea DiNoto, Hatleberg has been struck by "gemological awe." About an opalized snail fossil, millions of years old, DiNoto observes, "The fossilization process, in which a living creature like the snail can be alchemized into a jewel, fascinates Hatleberg and suggests to him that gems can be equated to life itself." Hatleberg's own fantastical gem-laden creations seek to convey the life force inherent in static mineral form.

Whether a fossil, an essay, or a piece of jewelry, all are imbued with energy from the source that begat them. Such tangible remains are reminders of what once existed, albeit in a transmuted state. It is thus satisfying that one of *Metalsmith*'s key missions is to document its field; to capture the lasting contributions of those whose lives are sometimes all too fleeting....

SUZANNE RAMLJAK
EDITOR

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

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Published by the Society of North American Goldsmiths

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Metalsmith (ISSN 0270-1146) is published both print and digitally in January, March, May, August, and October by SNAG, 540 Oak Street, Suite A, Eugene, OR 97401, 541-345-5689, www.snagmetalsmith.org.

Membership rates $79/year and up, full membership includes five-issue subscription to *Metalsmith*. Special student rates. Subscription to only *Metalsmith*: $25/year and up.

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The opinions expressed in *Metalsmith* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the staff or directors of SNAG or *Metalsmith*. Address unsolicited editorial material to: Suzanne Ramljak, 22 Rockwell Road, Bethel, CT 06801. Materials will be handled with care, but the magazine assumes no responsibility for them.

Metalsmith is indexed in the Art Index and EBSCO Media. Newsstand distribution: COMAG Marketing Group, 155 Village Blvd, Princeton, NJ 08540.

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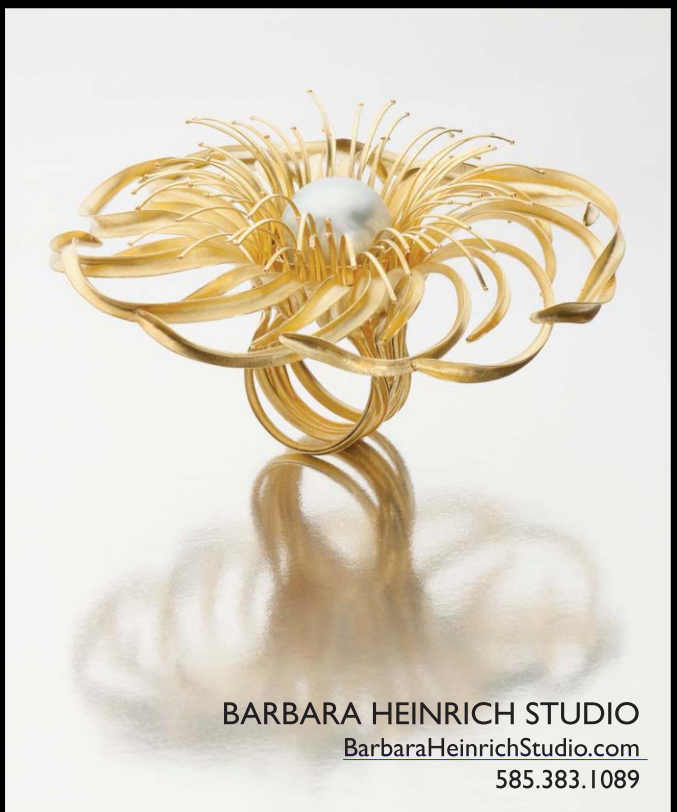

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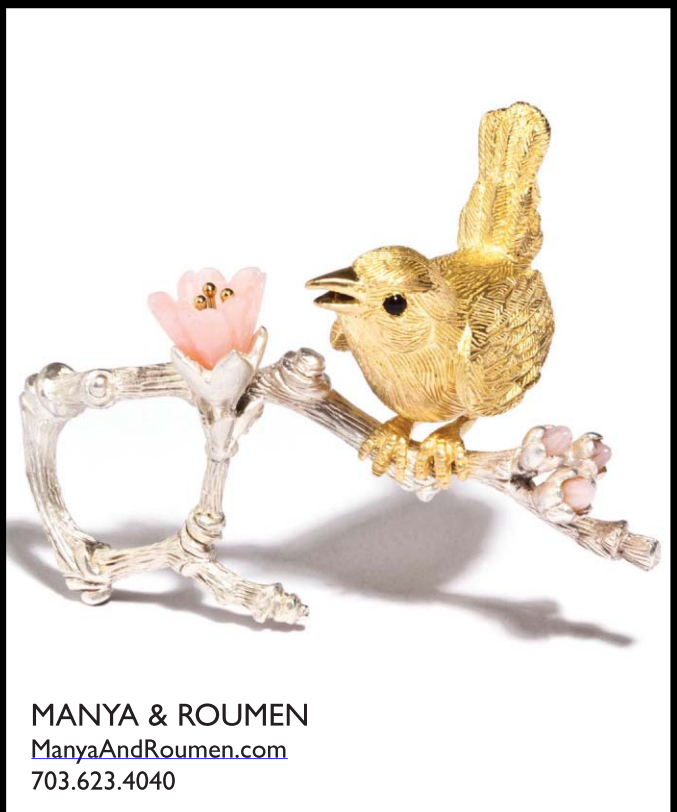

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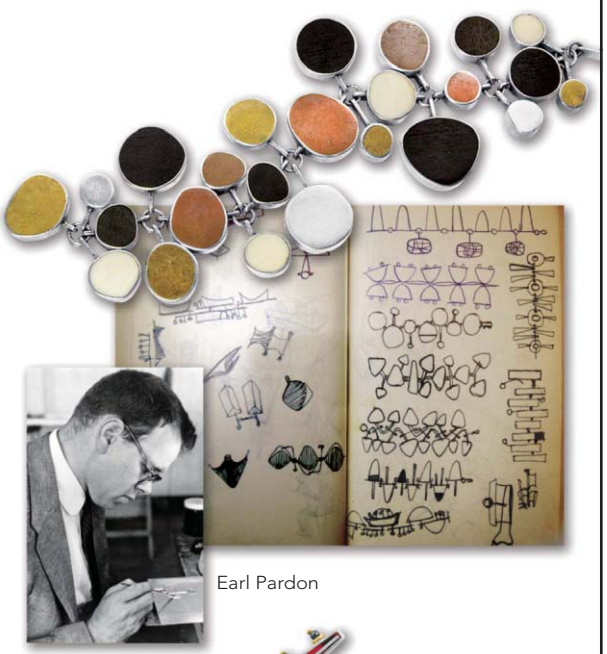

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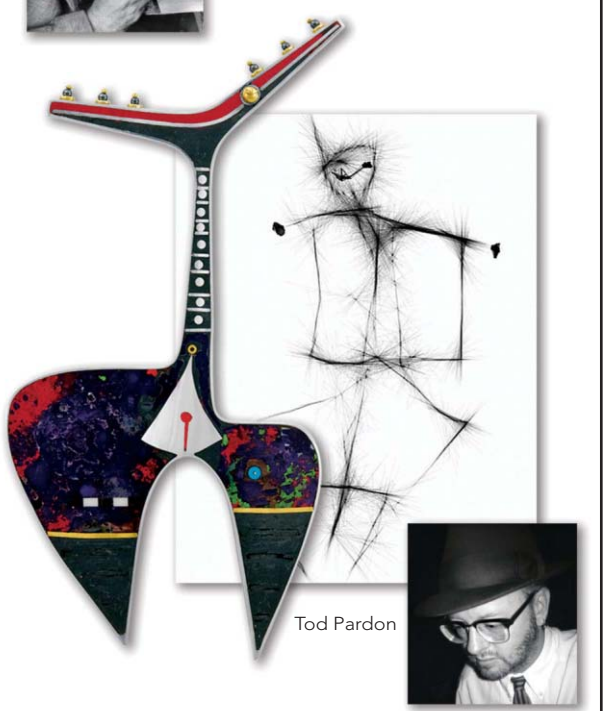

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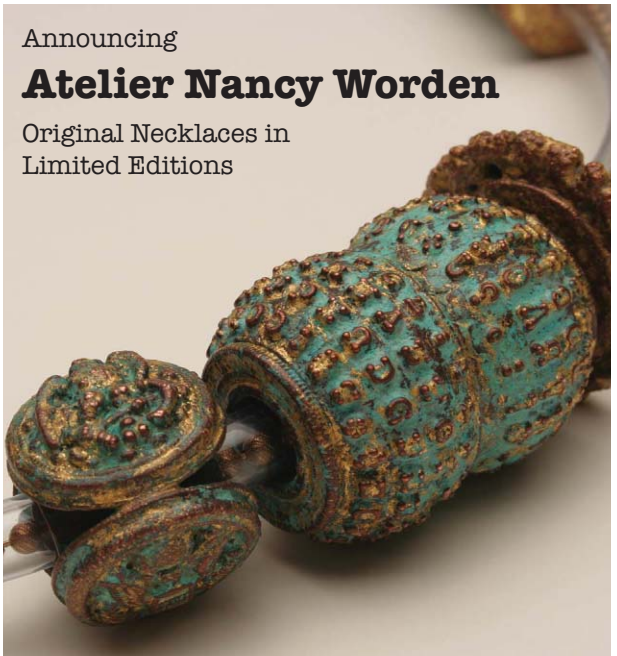

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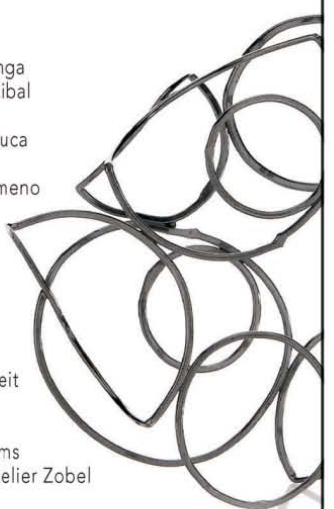

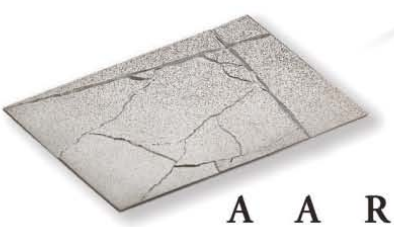

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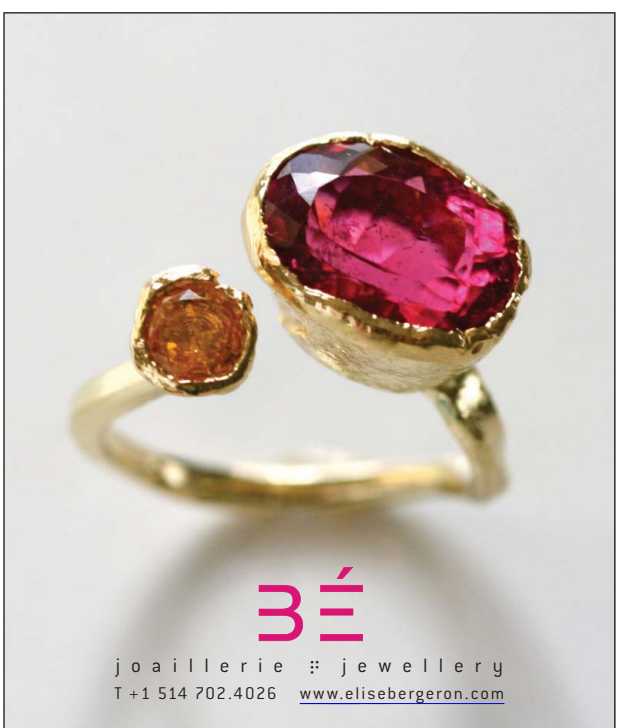

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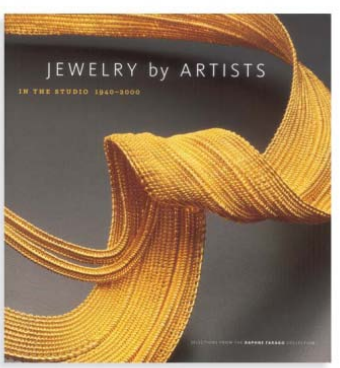
Jewelry by Artists: In the Studio, 1940–2000

KELLY H. L'ECUYER, WITH MICHELLE TOLINI FINAMORE, YVONNE J. MARKOWITZ, GERALD W. R. WARD
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, 2010
BY MARJORIE SIMON

EVERYTHING ABOUT this large-format volume says luxe: from the gold ribbon necklace swooping across the dust jacket to the silver cloth beneath, imprinted with austere sans serif gold lettering. Many readers will doubtless recognize the iconic handweaving of master goldsmith Mary Lee Hu; others will be introduced to handmade jewelry presented as art by artists for the first time.

Collector Daphne Farago was born in South Africa and raised in Europe, but she embraced her adoptive country of the United States by collecting American folk art and studio craft, including jewelry, all the while educating herself so that she would amass a "collection that a museum would want." This book documents the collection she donated to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 2006. Along with Helen W. Drutt English's books *Jewelry of our Time* and *Ornament as Art*, this new volume contributes to establishing the credibility of art jewelry in this country.

Curator Kelly H. L'Ecuyer's introduction begins, "Jewelry is an ancient art form, but the idea of art jewelry—jewelry as a self-conscious expression of individual artistic intent—is a modern one." L'Ecuyer tracks semantic changes, from "artist-craftsman" to "designer," then to "metalsmith," signaling the "commitment to materials-based skills," and settling at last on "studio jewelry" as best representing this approach to materials, ideas, and objects. She identifies four issues that engage and challenge today's jewelers: "the manner in which jewelers adapt ideas and styles from other branches of the arts; the question of whether jewelry is adornment or sculpture; the economic and moral problem of making one-off work or producing multiples; and the use of precious or nontraditional materials... Do studio jewelers follow behind the rest of the art world, belatedly producing watered-down interpretations of movements like surrealism, assemblage, or minimalism?" Finally, L'Ecuyer observes, "These recurring issues are held in a state of unresolved tension."



Conventional wisdom has it that the American craft movement, including jewelry, owes its early development to the post-World War II era and the perceived value of handwork as healing to war-traumatized veterans. The Museum of Modern Art played a role in promoting this with the exhibition "The Arts of Therapy," and artist Margaret Craver is given credit for persuading the US Surgeon General to initiate therapeutic metalworking classes by showing him wirework projects using simple hand tools. It goes without saying that veterans such as Ronald Hayes Pearson, Richard Reinhart, and Thomas Gentille are scarcely to be found among today's young makers. What also becomes clear is how much attention was actually paid to jewelry as art before the current debates began. L'Ecuyer reports that "Anni Albers took this idea to its limit by creating her do-it-yourself kits for MoMA." In 1971, before there were such venues as jewelry galleries, the Philadelphia Museum of Art included jewelry in a show called "Multiples: The First Decade."

The book contextualizes movements and individual artists, and details the development of the American approach to craft and making, namely the lack of a guild system, relative scarcity of university programs, and the mélange of community-based and early DIY programs. Much use is made of the Smithsonian archives and personal communication accounts for much of the research. Biographical details situate the artists in their times in an organic way as part of the narrative flow.

A brief chapter by Michelle Tolini Finimore titled "Sculpture to Wear" features what often passes for "jewelry by artists"—that is, production work by designers whose fabrication is done by machine or by others. Early in this genre are Man Ray, Max Ernst, and Salvador Dalí. Jewelry made by celebrity artists usually serves to inadvertently promote the originality of studio art jewelry. Despite the author's claim that Niki de St. Phalle's large colorful "Nanas" series was "well suited to jewelry because the graphic quality of the original sculpture allowed it to be readily translated into enamel," in fact the resulting work served only to replicate the artist's existing sculpture. The one exception is Alexander Calder. No greater proof is needed of his "commitment to fabricating his own jewelry: 'I can't let anyone else have my fun for me.'"

In the essays, L'Ecuyer and Finimore give context to modernism, while Yvonne

J. Markowitz provides mostly descriptions. She fills in some history on the use of acrylics and plastics, including footnotes suggesting sources for information on the many types of plastics and resins and their uses. Yet I question her statement that Frank Gehry is considered a "high-style jewelry designer," or that Lalique was the first to use enamel, glass, and horn as mimetic materials, when this assertion is contradicted in the next chapter. The history in Markowitz's chapter seems poorly integrated into the descriptions of the collection, as if too much were shoehorned into a single essay.

From Peter Chang to Mary Lee Hu, from Art Smith to Kiff Slemmons, the Farago collection includes examples of each epoch in the development of studio jewelry, with emphasis on the contributions of American jewelers. The more than 200 illustrations show a fraction of the works actually donated to the museum. As a maker, I was pleased to see the authors discuss materials as well as design; for example, Robin Quigley's use of epoxy resin over pewter in her 1984 necklace. On the other hand, Joan Parcher's mica necklace is described without addressing the metaphysical or philosophical aspect of her material choice. This made me think that the authors' knowledge of an artist was limited to the pieces in the collection. Given the number of artists and their materials this limitation may be understandable, but careless wording also leads to some misrepresentations. For example, J. Fred Woell's assemblage brooch precedes Robert Ebendorf's by a year, not the other way round. Nowhere does John Iversen say he "grinds away at his enamels," and in any case, the quote, from Susan Grant Lewin's 1994 book *One of a Kind*, is taken out of context. (For the record, stoning, the process by which enamelists gradually refine the surface of the glass, is not the same as grinding.)

Organized thematically and somewhat chronologically instead of alphabetically, the essays track the prominent schools of thought in the development of Western studio jewelry. There are no thumbnail sketches, and provenance of the work is listed only as the date of acquisition by the museum—2006—so there's no sense of the collector's process. In a way it isn't a book about collecting—that may be another story. This doesn't make it without value, of course.

Of inestimable value is a chronological bibliography of jewelry and metalsmithing books, from 1940 to 2000. The selected material ranges from the obscure: Lois E. Franke, *Handwrought Jewelry*, 1962, to the essential: Helen W. Drutt English and Peter Dormer's *Jewelry of Our Time: Art, Ornament and Obsession*, 1996. Anyone so inclined can sample charming and original books in the history of our field, such as an iconic '60s modernist, definitely non-academic, completely American, silver jewelry documented in Orville K. Chatt's 1972 classic, *Design is Where You Find It*.

The book contextualizes movements and individual artists, and details the development of the American approach to craft and making.

Marjorie Simon is a jeweler and writer based in Philadelphia.

Abhushan: Design Dialogues in Jewelry

BY URSULA ILSE NEUMAN

THE INTERNATIONAL JEWELRY summit "Abhushan: Design Dialogues in Jewelry" was held in New Delhi in February, the second in a series of World Crafts Council symposia uniting the regions of Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, North America, and Latin America around the topic of jewelry. The choice of India as the host country honors both its illustrious jewelry tradition and an important event in contemporary craft history. When Usha Krishna became the president of the World Craft Council in 2008, it brought full circle the historic founding of the WCC in 1964, when the doyen of Indian arts and crafts (and freedom fighter) Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay (1903–88) joined with Eileen Osborn Webb, founder of the American Craft Council and Museum of Contemporary Crafts, and her close friend Margaret Patch to welcome fifty countries to Columbia University.

Krishna, together with chairperson Nina Kothari and the Indian Craft Council, gave life to "Abhushan" (the Hindi word for adornment) with a whirlwind four days that included workshops, a symposium, a crafts bazaar, and a designer gallery of contemporary Indian jewelry that brought together a diverse group of artists, artisans, designers, scholars, and students. The international jewelry community was well represented with a stimulating exhibition titled "Seeds to Silver," whose theme was the transformation of commonplace materials into jewelry with sections from North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia/Pacific, and Africa. The Indian works on view ranged from handcrafted ethnic pieces, many of them historic, to the luxury gemstone creations worn by maharajas for centuries.

The event introduced Indian artisanal jewelry makers to contemporary concepts, techniques, and materials through one-on-one contact with highly skilled international artists. Over a period of five days, in a simple workshop replete with commonplace materials from stones to aluminum cans, some of the world's finest jewelry artists sat with artisans from all over India eight hours a day to coax the magical from the mundane. The artists included Helen Britton (Germany/Australia), who worked with recycled materials; Charmian Inman (Spain), seeds; Keith Andrew (Sri Lanka), paper and thread; Paola Leal (Chile), natural fiber; Akwele Suma Glory (Ghana), beads; and Tasso Mattar (Germany/Spain), copper and silver wires. The tools were rudimentary and the materials humble, but the transferred insights and experience were invaluable.

When the workshops ended and the "Abhushan" main event commenced, the dramatic contrasts of India were evident. Indian dignitaries, led by the Senior Minister of Delhi and the Union Minister of Textiles, whose ministry supports all Indian crafts (and a brief, gratuitous appearance by Miss Universe, who happened to be in New Delhi for another promotion), were surrounded by a bevy of photographers and television cameras. Scholarly lectures on the use of recycled materials in contemporary jewelry and others on the traditional and often symbolic role of jewelry in Indian culture were literally upstaged by noted Indian designer Raj Mahtani's well-choreographed fashion show, with elegant models sporting luxurious, over-the-top necklaces and earrings with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. An exception to this opulent adornment was Bollywood fashion designer Sabaya Sachi Mukherjee, who used some of the jewelry made in the crafts workshops to "add Indian soul to his international style," a look that worked very well.

"Seeds to Silver," in the spirit of a true global event, was assembled by guest curators from five continents and included more than 150 pieces. As curator of the North American section, I sought works that reflected the geographic and multicultural diversity of the United States and the vibrant studio jewelry scene. I chose established

Indian artisanal jewelry makers at the pre-summit jewelry workshop.

and mid-career artists and featured notable pioneers whose successful experimentation with concepts, techniques, and materials continues to inspire younger generations. The North American section was the only one to include nonwearable or barely wearable small installations, by Lisa Gralnick and Marjorie Schick. My fellow curators included Berlin jeweler, anthropologist, and curator Martina Dempf, Anne Leclercque of Belgium, and Nina Linde of Denmark, who chose works in nonprecious materials by renowned European jewelers. Paola Manfredi of Zambia assembled fine African works by both trained and anonymous artists from Egypt to Ghana and Namibia to Sudan. For Asia and the Pacific, Dr. Kevin Murray, Australian adjunct Professor of RMIT University, Melbourne, and online editor of *The Journal of Modern Craft*, selected works that adapted traditional garlands with a contemporary sensibility, featuring remarkably diverse neckpieces from Japan, Fiji, and Indonesia, as well as Australia and New Zealand, using stones, shells, paper, and found objects. The works selected by curator Alberto De Betolaza, president of the WCC Latin American Region and professor at Uruguay's University of Architecture, proved that contemporary jewelry in Latin America is in dramatic transition; the jewelry shown demonstrated the continuing vitality of metalworking alongside fine examples using textiles and recycled materials.

A stunning highlight of the exhibition was the cases devoted to an overview of Indian jewelry. Curator Ajana Somany chose superb works, primarily by anonymous makers, which had great symbolic meaning in Indian culture, with shapes and forms with universal appeal. There were several important loans from the Delhi Museum of Craft, many of which are illustrated in a second catalogue in the form of a notebook that deserves wider circulation.

In contrast to the primarily male artisans and craftsmen, the Indian Craft Council in Delhi is predominantly organized by highly cultured and dedicated women, mostly volunteers. They endeavor to raise the status of the Indian craftsman and promote the export of craft as part of their red-hot economy. Some of the issues and criteria discussed in the lectures reminded me of the era immediately after World War II, when the American craft movement was born, initially out of the humanitarian and economic need to support practitioners. I was concerned, however, that the overriding emphasis placed by Indian officials on increasing the export revenues with little mention of promoting the creativity of the artist-craftsman could lead to support for commercialized or production-line craft rather than one-of-a-kind works.

THE WORLD CRAFTS COUNCIL AND THE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER (HANDICRAFTS),
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESENT
abhushan
design dialogues in jewelry
4 - 6 FEBRUARY 2011 | THE ASHOK, NEW DELHI

Dignitaries at opening event of "Abhushan," including the sponsoring World Craft Council's chairperson. Usha Krishna (second from right)

"Abhushan" followed on the heels of the largest international contemporary art fair held in New Delhi to date and coincided with the opening of the stunning Anish Kapoor retrospective at the city's National Gallery of Modern Art. In Delhi's new residential neighborhoods and amidst the rebuilding of older sections, contemporary art galleries are springing up all over, presenting avant-garde and experimental works of painting and sculpture, sure signs that the energy and dynamism of this emerging international powerhouse are being reflected in its visual arts. The ambitious program of the World Craft Council combined with this burgeoning art scene represents an opportunity to cross boundaries and raise interest and appreciation for art jewelry as an important component of the visual arts. I hope the palpable excitement will soon lead to contemporary jewelry galleries as well.

Ursula Ilse Neuman is curator of jewelry at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York.

Thomas Mann
Born Survivor

BY ANDREA DINOTO

THOMAS MANN REPORTS that he's finally working on *Design for Survival,* "the book," he says, "I've been meaning to write for 20 years." Based on a workshop concept he originated at Penland School of Crafts in 1989 (and continues to teach around the country), the book will codify one of Mann's most burning concerns: how to combine "a jewelry artist's technical mastery and design capability with the necessity of entrepreneurial know-how." He should know, having gained his survivalist expertise over a tumultuous 40-year career as an innovative jewelry artist, sculptor, gallerist, and teacher. Mann is basically self-taught beyond a high school jewelry course in 1963, followed by stints working part time in silversmith shops in his Pennsylvania hometown. In fact, he turned seriously to jewelry only after pursuing a degree in set design and lighting. Eventually he developed his now-signature "TechnoRomantic" design vocabulary, a coupling of Dadaist concepts of assemblage with a commitment to the use of found objects and non-precious materials. Mann's wry, witty, Pop-imagistic constructions —often employing hand and heart forms— can convey a variety of connotations: heroic, humorous, poignant, political.

In 1982, five years after a particularly successful appearance selling his work at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, Mann moved to that city, where he established his home and business. Today, at 63, he is a fixture of the New Orleans art scene, with his freestanding metal sculptures ensconced in public spaces around the city, and his Gallery I/O (short for "Insightful Objects") celebrating its twenty-second year. In the gallery's adjacent studio-workshop, Mann and a staff of nine fabricate his designs to be sold in house, on his website, and through 70 galleries and shops nationwide. To make money, Mann admits, you have to sell a lot of jewelry; hence the emphasis on "limited multiples," a term he prefers to "production," which he feels "carries a negative connotation in the minds of many academically trained artists." "During a post-lecture Q & A at a prominent university," he recalls, "I was once asked by an art student how I felt about having 'sold out.' I asked, 'Isn't the goal of the artist to sell everything you make?'"

Mann's multiples are typically aggregates of charms, tokens, and chains in a mix of silver, brass, and bronze, ranging in price from about $75 to $500. In addition, each year he produces up to 200 labor-intensive unique pieces, but their sales, he says, "don't represent a profit for the business." To supplement gallery, store, and website revenues, Mann attends both wholesale and retail gift fairs like the 2010 New York International Gift Fair, where—despite the awful economy—he was delighted to pick up 22 new accounts. Still, Mann is increasingly disenchanted with such shows, citing their high cost, especially for hands-on jewelers like himself. In 2002, as a source of alternative income, Mann developed studioFLUX, a concept through which he offers how-to DVDs (e.g., "Learn to Saw"), jewelry-making kits, tools and supplies, and workshops "for advanced crafters." (His workshops and interviews are also available on YouTube.com.) Mann's popular Found Object Sandwich (FOS) kit contains metal plates and attachments (items resembling found objects), which can be turned into a piece of jewelry under his guidance. A separate Fastenation workshop is devoted to findings, while Project Object (PO) offers a three-day seminar in designing a product prototype and developing a marketing plan—a microcourse in managing a business like his. Such activities keep Mann

Thomas Mann, 2010, in front of a hurricane ruined building in his hometown of New Orleans. during filming of the PBS *Craft in America series*
PHOTO: MARK MARKLEY

"The one lesson I've learned," he says, "is that you can't do this artist path alone."

on the road up to 200 days a year—"My life is insane!" he's been known to declare—but he still finds time to make his own art and sculpture, to write, and to stay connected to the life of his city.

With a recent line of "Pelican" brooches, made in response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, Mann donates a portion of the proceeds to The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and The National Wildlife Federation. In 2005, for a post-Katrina CERF (Craft Emergency Relief Fund) fundraiser held at SOFA Chicago, Mann created "Storm Cycle," a series of nine wall panels composed of imagery, found objects gleaned from the hurricane's devastation, and a brooch that can be detached from the design. The work has now expanded to 20 panels, which have toured numerous museums and galleries worldwide. Mann discusses two of these panels in "Messages," a recent episode in the PBS *Craft in America* series. Executive producer Carol Sauvion called Mann "a natural hoice... a gifted artist and a protagonist for people in need." Mann is shown scouring destroyed neighborhoods for inspiration and materials, but also in his studio making freestanding sculpture and "imagineering" TechnoRomantic heart brooches with a members of his design team. Mann maintains, "Making is still the joy of my life." Although he quips that he now makes jewelry purely to support his "sculpture habit," Mann's commitment to his business remains uppermost in his concerns. He plans to turn studioFLUX into a bricks-and-mortar enterprise that could expand further through franchising. And he continues to explore the potential of licensing via QVC-type marketing. "The one lesson I've learned," he says, "is that you can't do this artist path alone." Mann's *Design for Survival* promises to provide art jewelers with a perfect companion for the journey.

Small Pelican Pin, 2010
nickel, brass, steel
1 ¾ x 1 ½"

Container Heart Pin, 2005
silver, acrylic, brass, steel, found objects
2 ¾ x 1 ¼ x ½"

Markings No. 3 (detail of brooch), 2005
from "Storm Cycle" series
acrylic, steel, paint, bronze
3 ½ x 3 ¾ x ¼"

Andrea DiNoto is a writer on art and design based in New York City.

Furthermore:
www.thomasmann.com

Tales of the Tin Man

A Toy Story

BY LANNY SILVERMAN

I HAVE ALWAYS been a collector. Over the years, the collections may have changed and so have I, but my love of objects remains a constant. Toys have remained an enduring passion. In the toy collecting world, many collectors fret over condition ("mint in box" being the ideal), which I respect, but I also harbor a love of the patina of worn and used objects, of the secrets and lives hidden within them. My collection includes stuff found on the street that speaks of decay, of time and use, of untold stories. I am also enthralled with the repair and restoration of things. My father was a skilled picker, tinkerer, and craftsperson; together we created some of my earliest toys, whether it was hand-carved puppets and a puppet theater or an HO gauge "Lan-San Line" train set.

My interest in vintage toys was evident in an artwork I made more than 30 years ago that even today serves as a key to meanings and layers of memory embedded in my collections. In it, metaphors of stopping time, capturing the past, and the evanescence of life itself are represented by drawings of toy charms of an airplane and a tin dragonfly pin, all encased in the "net" of wired security glass. The dragonfly is a key to later tableaux restating the memento mori theme. I have always been fascinated by metaphors that allude to the fleeting quality of life, with memories and objects that come and go.

Clowns and performers, 1950-60, German and Japanese
PHOTO: JAMES PRINZ, CHICAGO

With few exceptions, I don't collect things from my own past. Rather I enjoy recreating pasts and eras of my choosing —especially the so-called "Banquet Years," 1885–1914, just after mechanization (leading to the Golden Age of Toys, particularly emanating from Nuremberg, Germany). It was an era of automation, modern physics, Freud, the cinema, automobiles and airplanes, Cubism and Modern Art, Kafka, Joyce and Proust, and on and on. A deco sensibility, the age of streamlining, reoccurs in much of what I collect. I grew up in the early '50s, at the end of the so-called Golden Age of Toys, post World War II, with its dying embers evident in Japanese toy manufacturers' ingenuity, so toys like these were part of my discovery of the world.

What draws me to tin toys? Early metal toys of the mid-nineteenth-century were hand painted and quite lovely, but survivors whose enamel paint hasn't flaked off are rare and costly. The invention of lithography and its application to metal, which could then be molded or shaped into toys, was perfected in late-nineteenth-century Germany, making possible a beautiful array of patterning and detail in mass production that never ceases to amaze me. Some of my earliest acquisitions were pressed steel cars and trucks from the 1930s and '40s, which I favored for their astounding economy of means, their simple pressing of steel to create and activate negative spaces. The only cast iron toy I own, a Punch & Judy bank, I chose for its thematic rightness, given that its tin counterparts were not nearly as fetching. Amid the robots and space toys are some plastic toys, whose advent for me signaled the end of high quality in manufacturing but not necessarily invention (battery power had already made possible more complex and sustained actions). However, decorative elements soon devolved into decals and the like. Concerns about children's safety prompted the end of an era.

My collection is by its very nature a self-portrait, a record of where my curiosity has led me. It is indeed a *Wunderkammer,* or cabinet of curiosities, but one set free: displayed not in cabinets but in tableaux that employ most of the available space in our living quarters. The cabinets are the curator's constructs; my life and my art don't separate so easily. I enjoy structuring realities, and creating worlds with these toys engages what

I am and what I do professionally. They say every picture tells a story, that rooms tell stories, but objects and collections tell stories as well. So today, remarkably, I am a curator. Most of these tableaux (metaphorical cabinets) are organized around dialectic themes or tensions between polarities.

Let's go back to the Golden Age of Toys, when the remarkable creations of Ernst Paul Lehmann captivated the children of Nuremberg and well beyond. His toys consciously attempted to capture the cultural life of Berlin and other big cities, at a time when ostrich-driven carts in German colonial Africa—as well as new bicycles, automobiles, and other amazements from the earlier Industrial Revolution—excited the spirit of invention.

And here we bring in the clowns. The Vielmetter *Drawing Clown* (c. 1912) is a wondrous automaton, the only toy that this manufacturer ever made. Under its platform, interchangeable two-layered cams engage the ingenious mechanism that enables the clown to make contour drawings of famous personages such as Napoleon and Czar Nicholas II of Russia. In the same window tableau peaked hats on top not just the clowns, but even Herr and Fraulein Lehmann and the butcher, whose pig is ominously driving him to market? Surreal monkey-pigs lithographed on the Stock butcher cart's wheels and nearby the scary Oz-like monkey penny toy herald the sub-collection of monkeys in the adjacent room. German lithography is at its height here, even in small penny toys, such as the baboon, whose detail per square inch is extraordinary. Another great Lehmann toy, *Das Gute Im Kamffe Mit der Finsternisse* (The Good in Battle with Darkness) which is subtitled in English, "A Study in Black & White," cleverly introduces class warfare, as the high-heeled, white-clad pretzel maker fends off the advances of the lowly sooty black-clad chimney sweep by swatting at him with his ladle.

Some of my collections are organized chronologically. Others are arranged by theme, as are the monkeys, to show the variety of cultural histories hidden in representations of the same subject. Portraiture reveals a lot about the creator, and humans in general express a lot of their odd ambivalence in anthropomorphic depictions of monkeys. The nature of the gaze is also part of portraiture, and much of what

Tableau with German tin toys and photograph, all ca.1910–30
PHOTO: JAMES PRINZ, CHICAGO

My collection is by its very nature a self-portrait, a record of where my curiosity has led me.

Robots, ca. 1957-67, Japan, United States, Hong Kong; Insects, ca. 1930-60, Japan, Germany, United States; Pressed steel vehicles, ca. 1930, United States

Tin monkeys, ca. 1930-60, German, Japanese, American, British, Chinese
PHOTO: JAMES PRINZ, CHICAGO

E. P. LEHMANN
Das Gute Im Kamffe Mit der Finsternisse (The Good in Battle with Darkness), ca. 1920
German baker and chimney sweep toy with original box

expresses character or psychology, even in monkey toys. Most are from the post WWII era (1950s), with a few from the early '30s. The American work ethic prevails in the services provided by a calculating monkey or a polite monkey (bank) who tips his hat after receiving a coin. The Japanese sense of invention and play astounds, as is evident in the complex actions displayed by its colorful cast of primates. Here German engineering also makes possible a rich variety of motions from spring-driven motors, and their detailed lithography excels, from the small nearly monochromatic Köhler '30s guy, to the Technofix *Affie* soccer player whose face offers an example of "ugly beauty"—even more scarily represented by a seated Indian counterpart watching him, with tin stamping befitting a folk artist. Knockoffs were already common in this era. The Indian *Majid Family Circus* is a direct knock-off of the nearby Japanese-made *American Circus* toy. The monkey on the left harkens back to a whole history of representations of monkeys in Chinese painting. The British observer in back sadly alludes to the constricted national sense of play, mostly portrayed through imagery of Empire (toy soldiers and the fleet) or the beloved automobile.

My preoccupation with the power of facial expression also extends to the seemingly anthropomorphized machines in the lineup of robots and space toys on our dining room floor. The robots' order is largely determined by style as well as an evolutionary hierarchy: at the left, the talkers, displaying "intelligence" in varying degrees of language sophistication; next, Robert Robot's windup miniature record; then Chief Robot Man's robotic clicking and whirring "language"; then Smoking Robot's guttural puffs of smoke.

The "intrusion" of bugs into this combined tableau is a happy accident of the constraints of our living quarters. It caused me to notice the odd similarity of bugs to early plastic flying saucers, and encouraged me to draw parts from my Cootie collection to conjure up and mutate those into bug-spaceships in an attempt to transition between these seemingly unrelated themes by conflating alien invasion with bug invasion. Real found dragonflies and moths emphasize a memento mori theme. There are numerous variations of the same dragonfly toy; the earliest was one of my first purchases of tin toys. The 1930s pair of toy dragonflies hovering below a Pachinko game illustrates another kind of "ugly beauty" akin to the physicality of real dragonflies. Aesthetics often requires some remove from the actual.

These tableaux only tell half the story. Others take up nearly a full sunroom, perch on top of speakers or bookshelves, or are interspersed with other collections: art deco dishware, art, books, records, CDs. My wife is an artist who makes things, but has no real need to collect them. Her love of empty space recalls John Cage's story about zen master D.T. Suzuki, who, when referring to an empty room, said something like, "An old pair of shoes would look good in here." As a sculptor, perhaps she defines stuff by the space around it, while I curate a space and fill it up with stuff. We are a comic pair, nonetheless, as we navigate the dialectic of our differences. The collection continues to grow and occasionally shift its metaphysical cabinets, so to speak. As I write this, I hope to add a serious-looking bespectacled Greek tin wind-up monkey, and then who knows what the next find may be...

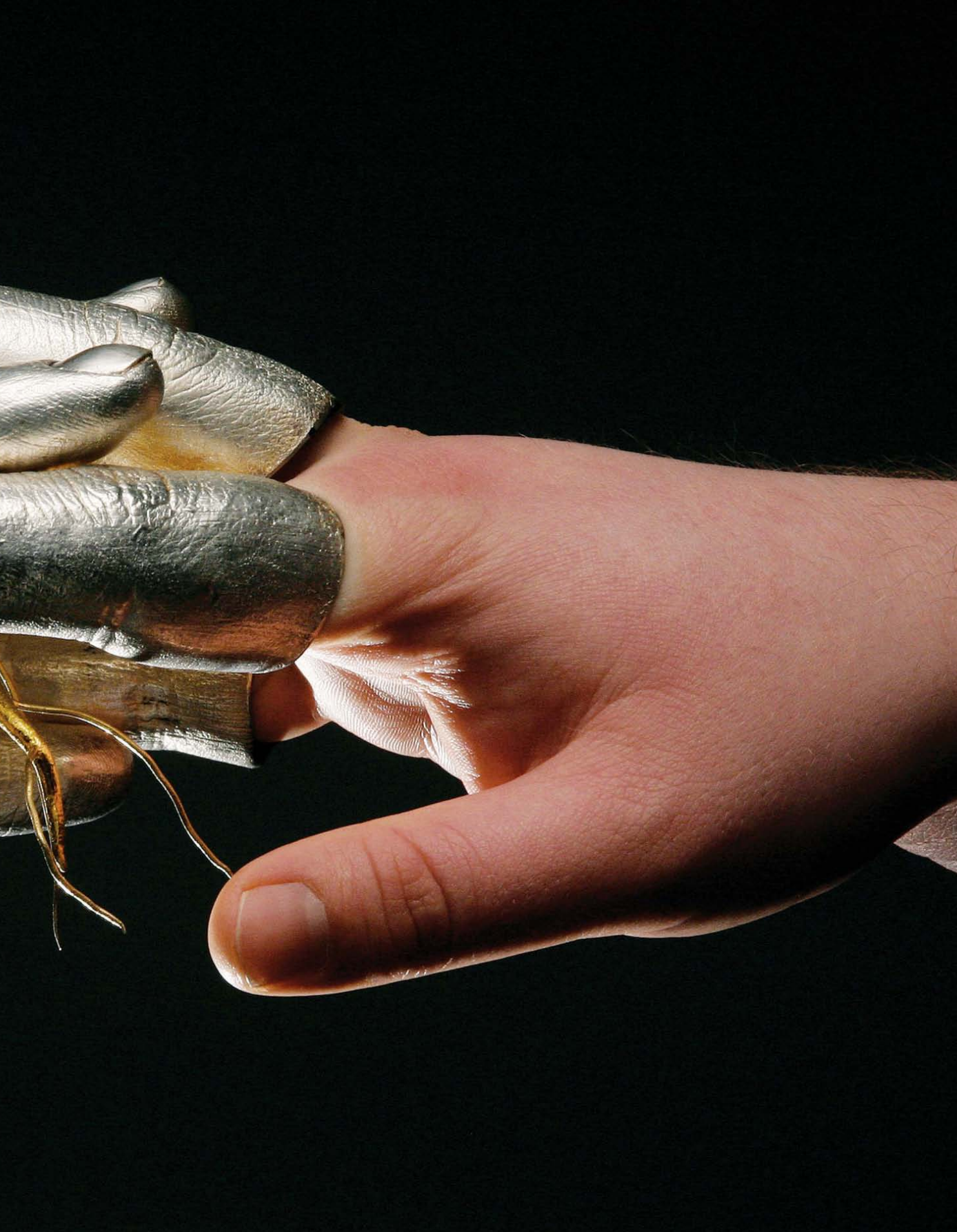
Lanny Silverman, a freelance curator and writer, was formerly Chief Curator of Exhibitions at the Chicago Cultural Center from 1990–2011 and has been curating art exhibitions, new music, film, video art, and much else for well over 30 years.

The collection continues to grow and occasionally shift its metaphysical cabinets, so to speak.

The Hand as Subject and Site

BY POLLY ULLRICH

REBECCA BARTON
Coalesce, 2010
sterling silver, 14k gold, 24k gold kuem-boo
4 ½ x 5 x 4 ½"
PHOTO: AARON PADEN



Tragically, Polly Ullrich died in a car accident in July before she could approve the copy edits to her text, so we have published the article as she submitted it. Even without editing, the clarity and richness of her writing ring out as a testament to her wonderful spirit and mind.

WE LIVE IN a world of flow. Physics tells us that there are no "solid objects," that our physical world is in a state of continuous transformation, its matter inherently active in ways that seem disconnected from our familiar physical environment. Our dynamic, technologized culture flings itself outward in digital, atomized bits across social spaces and databases in a perpetually mobilized landscape. Most interestingly, the old-fashioned, gendered, and unified Western European definition of self—what it unequivocally means to "be," or to be a human "individual"—has disappeared into decoherence, the result of our virtualized environment and an extended attack by theorists of deconstruction in the last half century.

Contemporary art, a speculative arena, has been coming to terms with this 21st-century world of complicated, reciprocal, ongoing process and engagement. For makers who ground their work in the use and meanings of the hand, it is a time of opportunity to rethink their practices. Even though the hand as both implement and concept refers to ancient ways of making, it also embodies new, hybrid ways of being. Linked to the activities of the body and the organic

MASAKO ONODERA
Eruption Cuff, from "Eruption" series, 2007
found objects, wool, brass

world, the extended meanings of the hand and its art mirror our newly evolving, dispersive model of human existence—and they offer a chance to investigate what the critic and artist Amelia Jones has called "the single most pressing philosophical question of our time," that is, " the very shape of subjectivity" itself.[1]

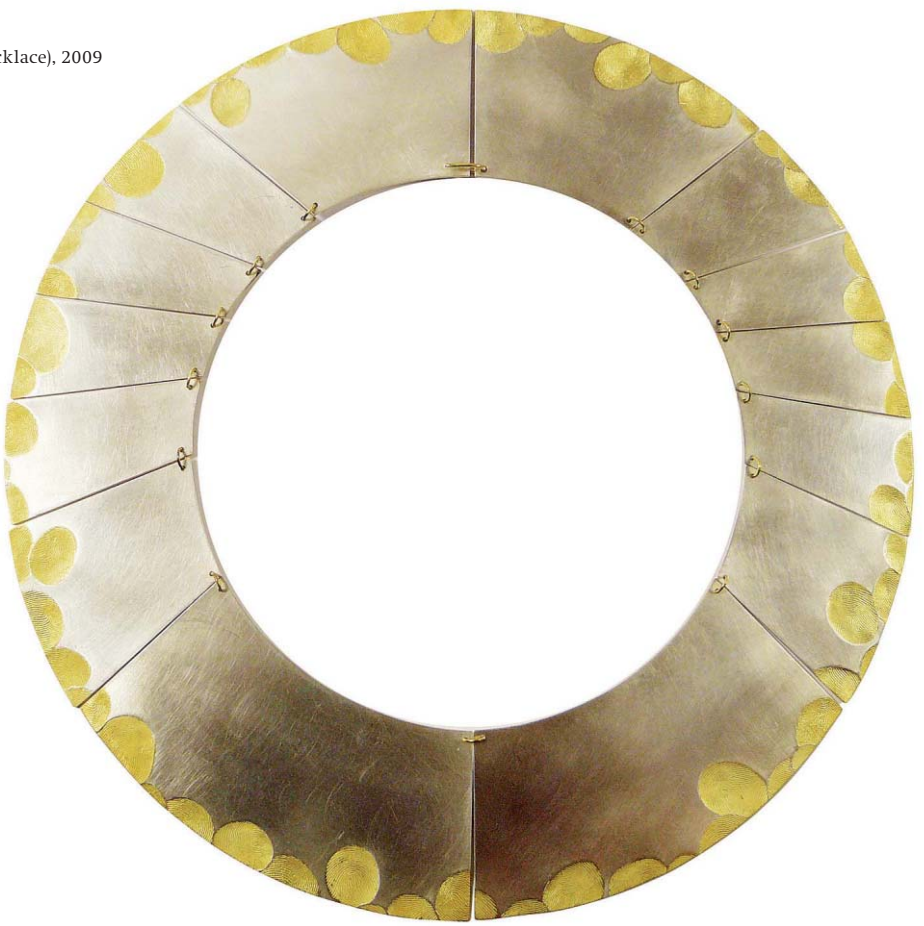
Much of contemporary art, as we know, has shifted from an exploration of static form to the staging of experience, including recent performance art, interactive art works and immersive installations. This dynamic model, however, has existed for thousands of years in the work of artists who create jewelry and related objects. Jewelry as an art form is "open": it works most clearly as a node of activities, not as a singular object. Jewelry circumnavigates through the world as it is worn and displayed; it transmits corporality by pushing the maker, the wearer and the viewer into noticing their bodies entwined in a physical experience of space. Jewelry's activities provide a prototype of the world as a place of diffusion and multiplicity, grounded by the physical senses. In jewelry, the business of both "being" and "doing" converge.

Contemporary artists exploit jewelry's performative possibilities even as they rely on its traditional alignment with symbols of personal identity. In Rebecca Barton's remarkable *Coalesce* (2010), for example, intercrossed gold finger coverings with straggling, protoplasmic roots imply the interplay of the human self within the flow and order of the natural world. In another instance, Masako Onodera's sensual "Eruption" series suggests the rampant, growing flesh of bulging body parts—a corporeal experience for the viewer that does not decorate so much as "identify the wearer as a living human being," she has said.[2]

Making as Being

Jewelry's partnership with the activities of the body and hand, therefore, establishes an opening in the world that merges existence and action. It is a subversive stance, affirmed and elaborated by the philosopher Giorgio Agamben, who repudiated the traditional, meager role allotted to the modernist art

Jewelry as an art form is "open": it works most clearly as a node of activities, not as a singular object.



GERD ROTHMANN
Finger Turns to Gold (necklace), 2009
silver, gold
diameter 9 ⅞"
COURTESY OF
ORNAMENTUM GALLERY

object as a place of formal, disinterested analysis, operating merely as an opportunity to display "good taste" for the privileged spectator. Agamben shifted emphasis, suggesting that we think about art from the artist's, not the spectator's, perspective, that we explore the primal act of aesthetic "making" and look at the work of art itself as a production site where "being"—existence itself—is created. By examining "making"—the uncanny ability to "call presence into absence" or to "cause something to appear"—the role of the artist takes on real power.[3]

With Agamben's transition from art as judgment and formal analysis to art as an expansive investigation into being and creating, the iconic force of the hand appears. Linked with the body, the workings of the hand stand as a sign and trigger for 21st-century identity and new realities. The artist Gerd Rothmann, for example, has made this connection explicit. Rothmann's series of necklaces, rings, bracelets, cufflinks, and earrings bear the ultimate mark of contemporary identity—his fingerprints—as in *Finger Turns to Gold (*2009), a silver necklace edged with gold prints. This is art that is as much *of* something—it is about physical presence—as it is *about* something, a representation.

A radical and expansive revision of making has invaded other fields of 21st-century culture—from digital text to relational aesthetics to collaborative theater. With the pervasiveness of interactivity, "making" reaches into the sphere of the spectator, whose role in the conventional workings of art had previously been relegated to the sidelines as an alienated "appreciator" or evaluator in many art practices.

Remaining within the longstanding interactive practice of jewelry as an example, however, Jennifer Crupi's participatory silver body apparatuses overtly position the wearer's hands into gestures that are meant to mimic emotional states. Crupi has cited the proverb "actions speak louder than words" for a machinic device *Ornamental Hands*, which forces the wearer's hands and fingers into the elegant, contorted positions seen in historic artworks, or her *Power Gesture* (2009), which requires the user to steeple his or her fingers into what only can be seen as an overbearing gesture of self-confidence. The work poses the question: "Will assuming a posture make one feel that way?"[4]

JENNIFER CRUPI
Power Gesture (worn), 2009
aluminum
8 x 8 x 6"
PHOTO: CHRISTIAN LUIS

KAY EPPI NOLKE
Band Aid Rings, 1995
stainless steel, silver, gold
dimensions variable

YUYEN CHANG
Untitled Ring,
from "Orifice" series, 2006
28k gold
1 ⅛ x 1 x 1"

Performing the Self, Making a World

Like the hand, jewelry—embedded in the drama of lived experience—literally stands at the juncture of identity "in the making." It functions most traditionally as a personal emblem, a symbol of social class, allegiance, occupation, and commitment, and the gestures that invoke its ancient customs carry psychic as well as communal weight. Bestowing a ring, for example, can mean a surrender of one's being in mythology. On the other hand, losing a ring might mean losing one's identity.[5]

The construction of the self, then, becomes collective, a social matter. And jewelry—meant to be handled—helps us think through a conception of subjectivity that is visceral, emerging from reciprocal, tactile, continually unfolding contact within the play of events. It is a notion at odds with the conventional, Cartesian mind-body split that until recently defined the Western European self.

Kay Eppi Nolke, in his poignant series *Band Aid Rings* (1995) of stainless steel, silver, or gold, for example, describes his rings this way: "Every ring, while being worn, is the basis for a new story, your story."[6] The Israeli artist Vered Barai's folded and hammered tin *Pinched Rings* (2010), on the other hand, explores the union of aesthetics with continuous, annoying pain related to the idea of the "pinch," referring to the daily, relentless discomfort of living in a war zone—like a "twinge in the heart."[7] Yuyen Chang's unsettling "Orifice" series, too, refers to the process of how scars heal from wounds, thus positioning the self as volatile, flesh-bound, continually unfinished, but open to self-healing. These artists all exploit the crafting of the self as open-ended, horizontal, and bodily—not the singular fabrication of a "higher" rational mind.

The notions of "self-crafting" and "world-crafting" come from a philosophical discourse in the West that links labor with thinking, and thus with the formation of new and imaginative realities or forms of "being"—remember, for example, Agamben's description of art as the ability to "cause something to appear." Most notably, the philosopher Martin Heidegger, in his seminal book *What is Called Thinking?* from the 1950s, wrote, "All the work of the hand is rooted in thinking." Heidegger compared thinking to cabinet making, adding: "perhaps thinking, too, is something like building a cabinet.

These artists all exploit the crafting of the self as open-ended, horizontal, and bodily—not the singular fabrication of a "higher" rational mind.

JOHN JENSEN
Skinwalker, 2009
length 11 ½"
Damascus steel, stainless steel, anodized titanium, crystallized titanium, fossil mastodon tooth, super conductor, abalone, makume gane, 22k gold leaf, 18k gold,
PHOTO: JESSICA MARCOTTE

At any rate, it is a craft, a handicraft."[8]

Enacting the hand as a form of embodied thinking diverts the West's longstanding philosophical search for the fundamental structures that underlie the appearance of human reality—mechanisms that explain, in other words, why there is a world at all—and locates that search outside of the usual Platonic analytical method of disembodied critique and judgment. Heidegger's hand-based approach to thinking reflects an alternative search for "being"—for that original, precipitate inkling of revealed "presence," of "manifestation," and the intuition of a "gathering" world which springs into consciousness from the reciprocal, entwined workings of the mind, body and hand.[9] It is a project developed further in the philosophy of phenomenologists such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty and articulated physically in certain participatory art forms, such as jewelry. It represents a volatile world of personal making, stitched together moment by moment —much like the self—as it is being lived out and thought through in human terms.

The philosopher Hannah Arendt once defined the human being as *homo faber*, or one who constructs him or herself a world.[10] Indeed, the image of the tool as a potent, focused extension of the hand and mind appears in the work of a surprising number of jewelers—see, for example, William Clark's tiny, quirky *Hammer Pins*. In another instance, John Jensen, a goldsmith and sculptor, has concentrated on exploring the implications of the most ancient tool in human history: functional knives, which Jensen constructs into wildly hybrid forms, with mythological connections to life and death, good and evil, and archaic tales of journeys toward self discovery. Jensen's finely worked *Skinwalker* (2009), a baroque fusion of metals, fossil parts, gold leaf, and gems, reflects its complicated combination of meanings in a contemporary world where knives are both dreaded for violence and heralded as scalpels for their life-giving attributes.

Jewelry and an Aesthetic of Relation

Art's historic project—particularly within participatory forms such as jewelry—has been to articulate and embody "what it feels like" to be a human being. We begin to understand new ways of thinking about the self and our contemporary culture with the old-fashioned hand, as it instigates active immersion

The use of the hand in art and jewelry, then, mimics how we suspect that the world exists.

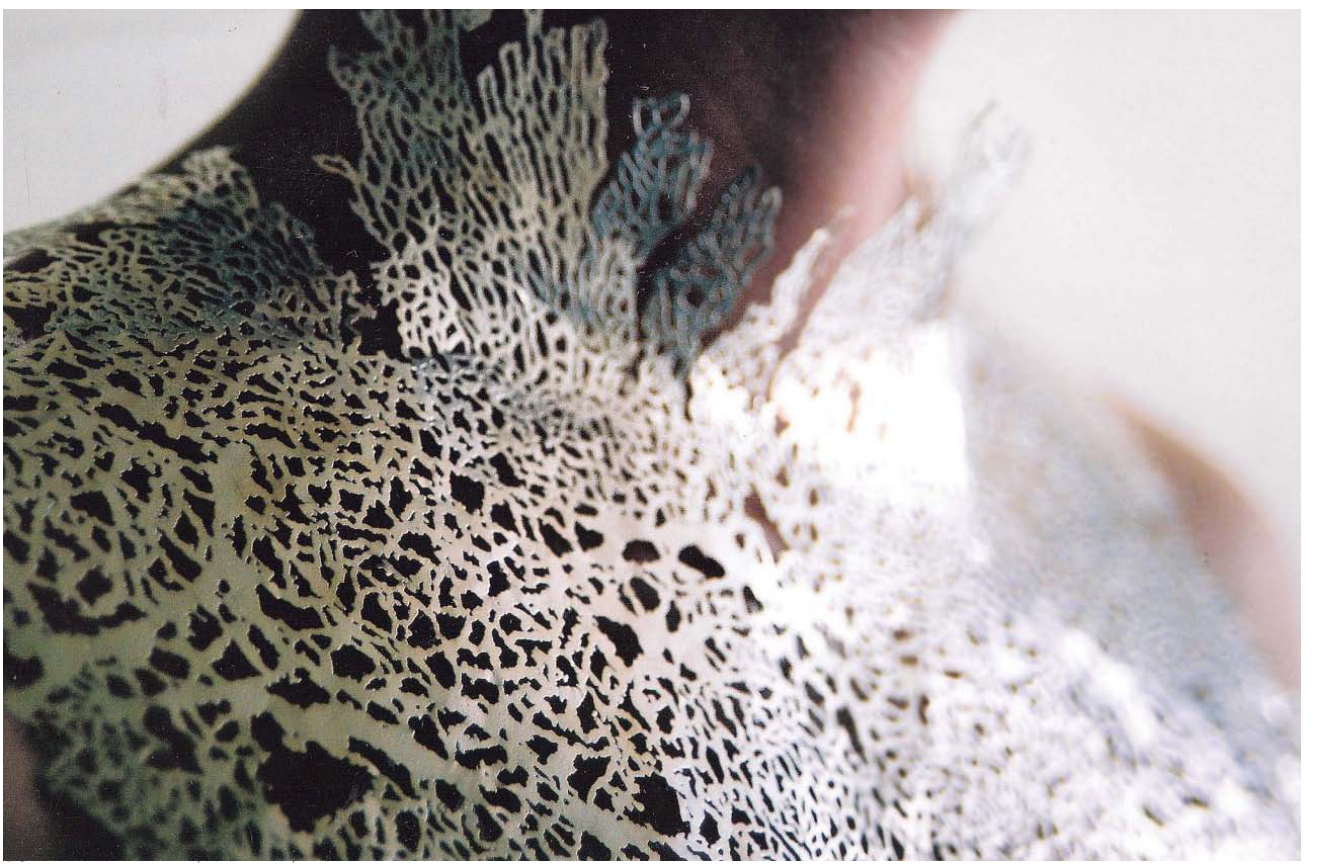
and a sense of powerful "being" in a world of flow. Art's creative impulse is to "'tell' the material world in its intractability," according to the artist Craigie Horsefield, to "'say' matter in which matter is both fugitive and has gravity," by signifying, opening up and activating the boundary between the self and the environment.[11]

This fusion of making/maker/artwork/and world proposes a profoundly mobile and contemporary elision between what is typically called "inside" and what is called "outside" in the creation of art—reflecting, for example, Cezanne's comment about a favorite landscape which, he once confided to Joachim Gasquet, "thinks itself in me... I am its consciousness."[12] In another illustration, the work of jeweler Nikki Stott, a design researcher at London's Royal College of Art, externalizes interior images of the body for adornment, suggesting that our cells and DNA, like the display of jewelry, play a role in determining our outward status in the world; see her electroformed copper *DNA Neckpiece* (2003), screenprinted with a microscopic image of DNA.

More overtly, Stott has also collaborated with scientists in the RCA-sponsored *Biojewellery Project,* which invited newly engaged couples to donate bone cells when their wisdom teeth needed to be extracted in 2005. Bone tissue was grown from the cells on a tiny scaffold and fashioned with precious metal into wedding rings. Each participant received a wedding band containing the bone of the other partner—literally registering jewelry's traditional role as a sign of ultimate commitment and deliberately entangling the borders of the inner body and the outer world. The project culminated in a lively public debate at London's Science Museum that year, on the intersection of art, biology, ethics, and the human body in bioengineering.

A scrutiny of the hand in art, then, presumes a mode of human "being," described by Merleau-Ponty, in which "speaking and understanding implies not only thinking, but, in a more essential way, the power to be let undone and redone by an actual other, many others possibly, and apparently by all."[13] This model proposes a 21st-century concept of subjectivity that is based on the notion—perhaps

NIKKI STOTT
Untitled (DNA neckpiece), 2003
electroformed/silver-plated image of human DNA
copper, silver



even an aesthetic—of relation, a concept of "being" that is not singularized into an absolute point within time and space. Craigie Horsefield has argued, for example, that in an aesthetic of relation, "being" itself can only be generated *between* individuals, that the "taking place of being" occurs "in the between" of each encounter. Together, he has argued, we bring each other "into being."[14] The currency of this aesthetic is clearly present, for example, in Laura Prieto-Velasco's "Phona" series (2009), a gently skewed brooch of wire, carpet tacks, latex paint and sterling silver, which prompts collaboration between viewer and wearer as they twist or stretch it over parts of the body. In this vway, *Introversion* stands as a site of transformation, catharsis, and play.

The use of the hand in art and jewelry, then, mimics how we suspect that the world exists. As an iconic symbol of "making," the hand represents a fundamental engagement with the creation of "being," or existence itself. The arena of the hand opens up a kind of existential space that articulates the profound shift within the contemporary, contingent, and creaturely self—enhanced and dispersed by technologies, as it is, in the lived world.

1. Amelia Jones, *Body Art: Performing the Subject* (Minneapolis, London: The University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 203.
2. Masako Onondera, website: web.mac.com/masakoonondera/Masako_web/Home.html.
3. Giorgio Agamben, *The Man Without Content* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 72.
4. Jennifer Crupi, website jennifercrupi.com.
5. Wendy Doniger, 2010 Zabriskie Lecture, "Faking It: Narratives of Circular Jewelry and Deceitful Women," Jungian Psychoanalytic Association; see video at www2.nyjung.org/?p=494.
6. Kay Eppi Nolke, website www.artaurea.com/jewelries/25-kay-eppi-nolke.
7. Vered Babai, website www.icarealot.me/page130.html.
8. Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* Trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers Inc., 2004), 16.
9. Heidegger, *Thinking,* 237
10. Hannah Arendt, quoted in Mary Dietz, "Hannah Arendt and Feminist Politics," in ed. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman, *Hannah Arendt Critical Essays* (Albany: State University of New York, 1994), 234.
11. Craigie Horsefield, "World and Word," in ed. Catherine de Zegher, *Relation* (Paris: Jeu de Paume, 2006), 65.
12. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Sense and Non-Sense*, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 17.
13. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, quoted by Jean-Pascal Flavien, website www.art-agenda.com/shows/jean-pascal-flavien. From Merleau-Ponty's *The Prose of the World*.
14. Craigie Horsefield, Introduction, in ed. Catherine de Zegher, *Relation* (Paris: Jeu de Paume, 2006), 37.

LAURA PRIETO-VELASCO
I Can't Reach You, from the "Phona" series, 2009
iron wire, silver solder, latex paint, nail polish, tape, sterling silver, stainless steel
4 x 2 x 4"

WILLIAM CLARK
Hammer Pin, 1975-2005
length approx. 3 ½"

John Nels Hatleberg: Art, Artifice, and a Passion for Gems

BY ANDREA DINOTO

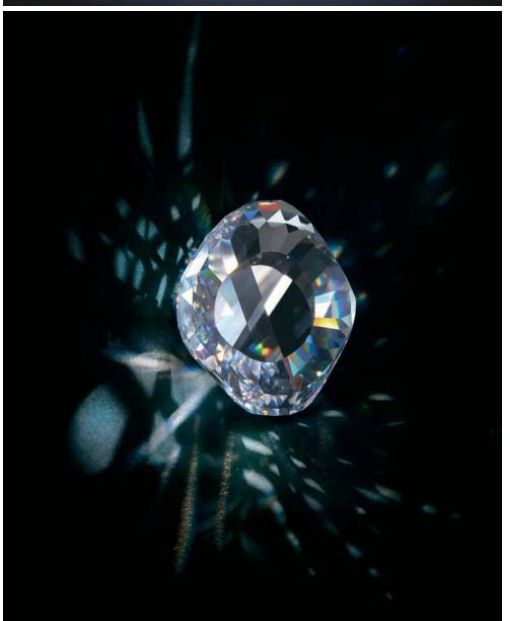
Green Lantern Ring
diamonds, pearls, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, tourmalines, spinels, red emeralds, pallasite peridot
1 ¼ x 1 x 1 ½"
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

Moldavite and pearl Pin
moldavite, South Sea Pearl, seed pearls, 18k gold
2 ¼ x 1 ⅞ x 1"
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

JOHN HATLEBERG'S CONSUMMATE skill as a counterfeiter is much in demand, not by underworld characters but by museums, collectors, and prominent jewelers around the globe who know him as the world's foremost creator of replica diamonds. His faux gems, which he describes as "visually indistinguishable from the originals," are copies of stones so extraordinary that they almost always have names, and often histories—famous and infamous. Using a proprietary process he developed in 1987, Hatleberg has replicated no less than the Smithsonian's deep sapphire-blue Hope diamond, the 1851 Koh-i-Noor (part of the British Crown Jewels), and the 273-carat Centenary (the largest D-flawless diamond in history). The more than 30 storied gems can be viewed on his website in all their eye-dazzling glory. The replicas (made of synthetic, and sometimes gem, material) are valued primarily as indelible records of the true stones and also for security or sometimes display purposes. In one case—the details must remain secret—a Hatleberg replica was used to ransom a kidnapped owner of the original.

Tony's Hope (Hope Diamond replica), 2010
1 x ⅞ x ½"
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

Koh-i-Noor, diamond replica, 2006
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO



But diamonds represent just one facet, so to speak, of Hatleberg's seemingly inborn gemological passion. He grew up in the Washington, D.C., area, where his mother worked at the Smithsonian. The household was filled with art books, one of which, Ian Balfour's *Famous Diamonds*, struck a chord in young John's mind. Encouraged by his parents, who provided him with his own cutting machine at age 10, Hatleberg proved himself a precocious lapidary. He benefitted from mentors at the Smithsonian, and until college made a serious study of geology. Drawn as well to the world of art, he was the first and presumably only Cranbrook Academy of Art student to use minerals and gemstones as his basic sculptural material ("They called me Mica Man," he recalls of his time pursuing a master's degree at the school.)

Today Hatleberg, 50, derives the bulk of his income from his diamond replica commissions, but he devotes himself just as intensely to the creation of artworks using gems and minerals as basic materials. He also designs unique pieces of jewelry by commission only, and collects unusual gem, mineral, and fossil specimens, which sometimes find their way into his art. One gets a sense of how all this gem-fueled passion hangs together when visiting his apartment in a posh high-rise building across from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Hatleberg is genial, casual, and low-key, pleased to usher a guest into his formal dining room, which also functions as an exhibition space, albeit one with a jewel-box ambiance. The room's French doors are held open by two astonishing three-foot-tall amethyst geodes shaped like rearing serpents and the walls are entirely covered in muted gold leaf (applied, he says, by an artisan who does such work for mosques in Jerusalem). Artworks displayed around the room include a "painting" made by layering tourmaline flowers on a rose quartz "canvas," the whole set in a goldplated pyrite frame. A side table holds various tableaux assembled from "found" gems, that is, nuggets, baroque pearls, and crystals that mimic recognizable forms. In one such tableau, *St. Francis Preaching to the Birds,* several large and lustrous freshwater pearls have been selected for their cartoonish resemblance, variously, to a kneeling man, a duck, a bird in flight, stars, puffy cloud formations, and one bubbly Dr. Seussian creature. All are set—glued, actually; Hatleberg can be startlingly casual—to a slab of shimmering opal about the size of an iPad. The incongruous effect is that of a piece of naïve art interpreted by a slightly mad jeweler. In another tableau, *The Golden Calf* (2008), a naturally formed gold nugget in the shape of a calf is mounted on a jagged piece of iron meteorite, together with specimens of silver and copper, to form an amalgam of the biblical narratives of the Burning Bush and the Golden Calf. Hatleberg delights in the irony that although the original golden calf was made by man as a graven image (to be worshipped by the Israelites while Moses was up on Mount Sinai receiving the ten Commandments), his was "made by God," and thus "a wonderful jibe at religion." In stark contrast is an abstract sculpture: a grouping of slender black towers constructed from stacks of naturally occurring, roughly half-inch-square cubic crystals of Spanish pyrite.

In each of these works—including one in which a real hummingbird's nest is arranged with nest-shaped mineral formations, and another comprised of tiny penis- and vagina-shaped columns of pearls set up as if for a square dance—Hatleberg shows how both biological and abstract forms were prefigured in the creation of the universe and exist today as gemological phenomena. As a gemologist, he is also interested in how ancient cultures incorporated gems and minerals into their belief systems. Inspired by a pre-Columbian Incan account that speaks of entire gardens recreated in silver and gold, Hatleberg took real corn cobs, complete with husks, and replaced the kernels with lustrous pearls to create a conceptual jewel in which gems honor the Incas' reverence for their life-sustaining crop.

While the dining room serves as a display area, a small bedroom functions as Hatleberg's unlikely studio, where high-tech activity takes place in a decidedly low-tech environment. To cross the threshold, one has to step on a slab of petrified wood about the size of a small scatter-rug. This hunk of fossilized tree is a gleaming gemstone streaked with earthy tones of gold, black, and brown, in which the original wood has been replaced, over eons of life on Earth, with a crystalline mineral substance. It is, quite literally, a stepping stone into Hatleberg's inner sanctum. Here the replica diamonds are produced, but the setting is far from pristine, as might have been expected. In fact, it's a bit of a mess. This is surprising, as each replica demands intense concentration and technical exactitude, not to mention incredible patience (months, per gem, at the faceting wheel; 14 months on the Centenary Diamond alone). Hatleberg's method requires making silicon molds of the original diamond from which every facet can be mapped. (The real gem is never on his person or in his studio.) A casting made from the mold is used to produce a replica in a measure-and-cut procedure. Hatleberg sits at an Ultra Tec faceting machine mounted incongruously on a funky, gold-leafed round table he describes as a "Baroque baldachino," a repurposed canopied structure that he discovered on the Lower East Side. "I think of it as a UFO," he says, "a transporter to another realm." Working at the Ultra Tec, he enters what in his words sounds like an altered state. "When the wheel is spinning and the motor humming it's hypnotic," he says. "My mind is free to think about my life, generally, and the people in my life. I feel that I'm cutting the people I love into the stone; I think some of that energy goes into my gems and makes them more powerful, that gems take on a patina of the lives that pass through them."

Arrayed in front of him on the baldachino are dozens of Hatleberg's favorite gemological treasures and curiosities, objects that suit his self-described "wunderkammer sensibility," ranging from gemstone eggs and baroque pearls to a tiny "Christmas tree" composed entirely of sparkling Colombian emerald crystals. Hatleberg mentions cryptically that the tree sits on "a slice of the planet Mercury," explaining when pressed that the material had been found to contain " isotopes of carbon and hydrogen that don't exist on Earth." Set unobtrusively on the studio floor is one of Hatleberg's

Chrysocolla Nest, 2005
South Sea pearl, hummingbird nest, chrysocolla.
2 ½ x 7 x 3 ¼"
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

"I think some of that energy goes into my gems and makes them more powerful, that gems take on a patina of the lives that pass through them."

The Golden Calf, 2008
gold, silver, copper,
meteoritic iron specimens
4 x 4 x 4 ½"
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

Mineral Kingdom, 1988
mineral specimens with hematite,
graphite, mica, rutile in resin
9 ½ x 8 ½ x 4"
PHOTO: JOHN HATLEBERG

Flower Painting, 2000
tourmaline, rose quartz, gold leafed pyrite, quartz, peridot
24 ¾ x 24 ¾"
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

major artworks: a black box called *The Mineral Kingdom*, his homage to Joseph Cornell's *Taglioni's Jewel Casket*, a surrealist work in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Cornell's felt-lined box, filled with three rows of glass ice cubes fitted into slots, honors the nineteenth-century Italian dancer Marie Taglioni, whose carriage was stopped, as legend has it, by a Russian highwayman requesting she dance for him on the snow. In Hatleberg's version, the box itself is made of resin that has been filled with powders of different minerals. Inside, rows of identical black cubelike forms serve as pedestals, each for a different mineral specimen. Calcite, azurite, malachite, pyromorphite...the names mystify the amateur, but when spoken have the effect of an incantation, which may be exactly the result Hatleberg intends. In every sense, the box is a microcosm of Hatleberg's world, offering a sampling of the Earth's riches and beauty in all its brilliant color, form, and mystery. As if to provide a portal into this mystery, Hatleberg created the equivalent of a scrying (fortune-telling) stone, basically a slice of a meteorite polished to a mirror finish. He explains that a meteorite (a rock that falls to Earth) is a "solid ball of iron and nickel alloys" formed over hundreds of millions of years of cooling. "I thought if I made [this particular specimen] into a mirror," he says, "it would be like looking into all time."

This sense of gemological awe also imbues Hatleberg's far-from-ordinary jewelry designs. For an engagement ring—"the single most powerful jewelry form," he says—he chose fulgurite, a type of mineral formed when lightning strikes sand. Writing on his web site, Hatleberg notes that this "lightning bolt" ring delighted the couple, who "liked the allusion that they would be wearing the harnessed power of lightning to represent their love." Hatleberg defines jewelry rather broadly. For a family—husband, wife, and two daughters—he designed a *Chart Gem,* in which a faceted sapphire nestles in a cluster of amethyst crystals that line a fragment of eggshell: the two gems are the parents' birthstones, while the faceting is based on the daughters' astrological charts. Originally conceived as a freestanding piece, Hatleberg eventually made it into a pendant. Asked if he's ever designed a piece of jewelry for himself, he produces his outrageously extravagant and oversized *Green Lantern* ring composed of a "kitchen sink" of jewels. The flaring flat-topped form of the massive 18-karat gold base, entirely pavéd with emeralds, rubies, diamonds, sapphires, spinels, and tourmalines, provides a stage for six huge gemstones that perch on top like spaceships on a landing pad. Hatleberg has subsequently made four similar rings for one client, an artist, who wanted a different one for each season of the year. It would be hard to upstage such a showpiece, but Hatleberg managed to do it with *She Jewel,* an event in which a seminude model was adorned with 30,000 tiny gems affixed to a diaphanous adhesive garment. Done for a photo shoot, and with assistants, this ephemeral creation now exists only as photographic evidence of Hatleberg's audacity with his chosen medium.

As a collector of unusual gem, mineral, and fossil specimens, Hatleberg searches for extraordinary examples at

the annual gem shows in Tucson, Arizona, at which dealers converge from around the world. A notable find can become a piece of jewelry, as did a keshi pearl with the anatomical shape of a human heart, complete with aorta and pulmonary vein, made into a pendant. Hatleberg describes such natural specimens as "my sculptures," just as an art collector would refer to prized acquisitions. Most precious and extremely rare among them is a blue-green opalized snail fossil from Australia, six to eight million years old. "With its Fibonacci display," says Hatleberg, "it seems to concern the miracle of life." The fossilization process, in which a living creature like the snail can be alchemized into a jewel, fascinates Hatleberg and suggests to him that gems can be equated to life itself. The evidence can be as miniscule as a rabbit's tooth fossilized to pure turquoise, or as massive as a ram's skull turned entirely to selenite, a variety of gypsum. Pure white with curving horns intact, the head was found in a salty Australian lake, where fossil hunters troll regularly for such crystallized specimens. It is now displayed prominently among Hatleberg's and his wife Rise's impressive collections of antiques.

In his treatise *On Love*, the nineteenth-century French writer Stendhal speaks metaphorically of "the birth of love" as an abstract event in which the love object is crystallized in the mind. In Hatleberg's world, where crystallization is a concrete reality, the love object occupies time and space. Witness his most arresting specimen, a voluptuous, three-dimensional chalcedony "flower" whose softly glittering quartz-filled cavity bears an uncanny resemblance to a vagina. In gemspeak, this is a botryoidal formation common to Arizona, where similar, if less explicit, specimens are referred to as desert roses. Hatleberg acquired it at a gem show in Tuscon, at one of the many hotels hosting gem, mineral, and bead dealers. "I was told to go to this particular dealer," he says, "and as I was arriving, two women walked past me that looked like young hippies." As he entered the dealer's room and took up the specimen to examine it, the dealer exclaimed, "Did you see them? Those two women have been praying to the thing for 45 minutes!" Hatleberg explained that this was exactly what he had come to buy. "I've seen hundreds of chalcedony flowers," he says, "but this one was wonderfully vaginal." No doubt the two women felt the same, even worshipful at the sight of such a astonishing natural formation in which the essence of love, sex, and generative power had been, quite literally, crystallized.

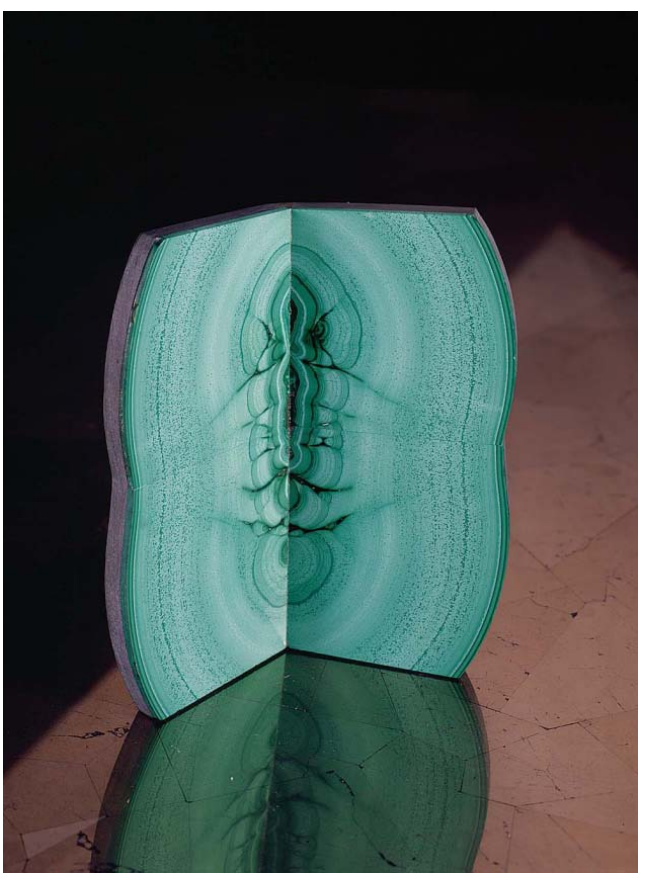
The fossilization process, in which a living creature like the snail can be alchemized into a jewel, fascinates Hatleberg and suggests to him that gems can be equated to life itself.

Andrea DiNoto is a New-York based writer on arts and design.

Furthermore:
www.johnhatleberg.com

Opal Snail
PHOTO: TONY PETTINATO

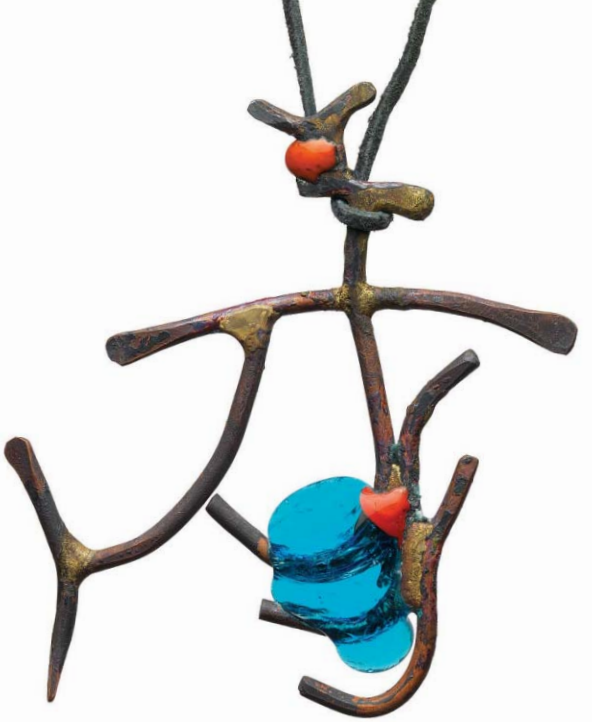
Malachite Vagina, 1992
malachite, serpentine
4 ¾ x 5 ½ x 1 ¾"
PHOTO: KEITH SCOTT MORTON



ART SMITH
Neckpiece, 1948
brass
7 x 8 x 1/14"
COLLECTION MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN
PHOTO: JOHN BIGELOW TAYLOR

"Diamonds Were the Badge of the Philistine" Art Jewelry at Midcentury

BY JEANNINE FALINO



CLAIRE FALKENSTEIN
Pendant, 1961
glass, iron
4 ¾ x 4 ¼ x ½"
THE DUKOFF COLLECTION

ED WEINER
Brooch, 1955
sterling silver
3 ⅛ x 2"
COLLECTION
NEWARK MUSEUM

MODERN "ART JEWELRY" is a term that fully emerged in and was defined by the mid-twentieth century.[1] It is a term that we, as twenty-first-century readers of *Metalsmith*, take for granted. In general, art jewelry is artistic, rather than fashionable, is created by artists rather than commercial jewelers, and as often as not is made of nonprecious materials. Art jewelry did not come into its own until the 1940s and 1950s, and then only to a small, self-selected group of practitioners and collectors, largely clustered in metropolitan areas and associated with art schools, before joining in the widening stream of studio crafts that emerged in the postwar era. It forms a key aspect of two exhibitions opening at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York this fall. The first is a multi-disciplinary show titled "Crafting Modernism: Midcentury American Art and Design," and the second, "Picasso to Koons, Artist as Jeweler," features an international roster of artists and sculptors working from the 1930s to the present. This essay considers the contributions made by pioneers of midcentury art jewelry, the seminal exhibitions in which their work appeared, and the generation it inspired.

For centuries, the fabrication of jewelry in the West traditionally took place within the confines of small workshops that served societal needs by fabricating wedding rings and mourning jewelry, among other ornaments that also complemented fashionable dress. By the late nineteenth century, small workshops yielded to manufacturers that produced quantities of commercial goods for sale in their own stores (Tiffany & Co. is the best-known example) or retailed through small jewelry shops across the country. Most Americans patronized such stores to obtain gifts for special events such as weddings, anniversaries, and graduations.

The tacit role of jewelry as a social marker and pleasing accessory to a man's or woman's wardrobe experienced its first challenge in the late 1920s when painters and sculptors began to turn to this art form, finding it a satisfying extension of their work in other media. Three individuals propelled the modern art jewelry movement that flourished in the mid-twentieth century: Alexander Calder, Salvador Dalí, and Anni Albers.

Of the three artists, the sculptor Alexander Calder (1898–1976) was undeniably the first and most influential. As a boy he created necklaces for his sister's dolls that were made from beads and lengths of stripped electrical wire scrounged from the street. In the late 1920s as a young man in Paris, Calder continued his penchant for jewelry by fashioning objects for his circle of artistic friends, including Spanish sculptor and painter Joan Miró. Wire became Calder's primary métier, which emerged about 1926 when he created his famous kinetic assemblage *Cirque Calder*, inspired by visits to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus, whose figures the artist manipulated in performances that often lasted up to two hours.

Calder's wire sculptures of figures, portrait heads, and animals were a large part of his artistic repertoire, as well as the mobiles and stabiles that won him international fame, but these developments occurred in tandem with a steady

production of jewelry for family, friends, and for sale through galleries. As early as 1929, these pieces appeared at Fifty-Sixth Street Galleries in New York in a show titled "Alexander Calder: Paintings, Wood Sculpture, Toys, Wire Sculpture, Jewelry, Textiles," and at Galerie Neumann-Nierendorf in Berlin, demonstrating the artist's willingness to sell in the marketplace, as long as it was within a fine art setting.[2]

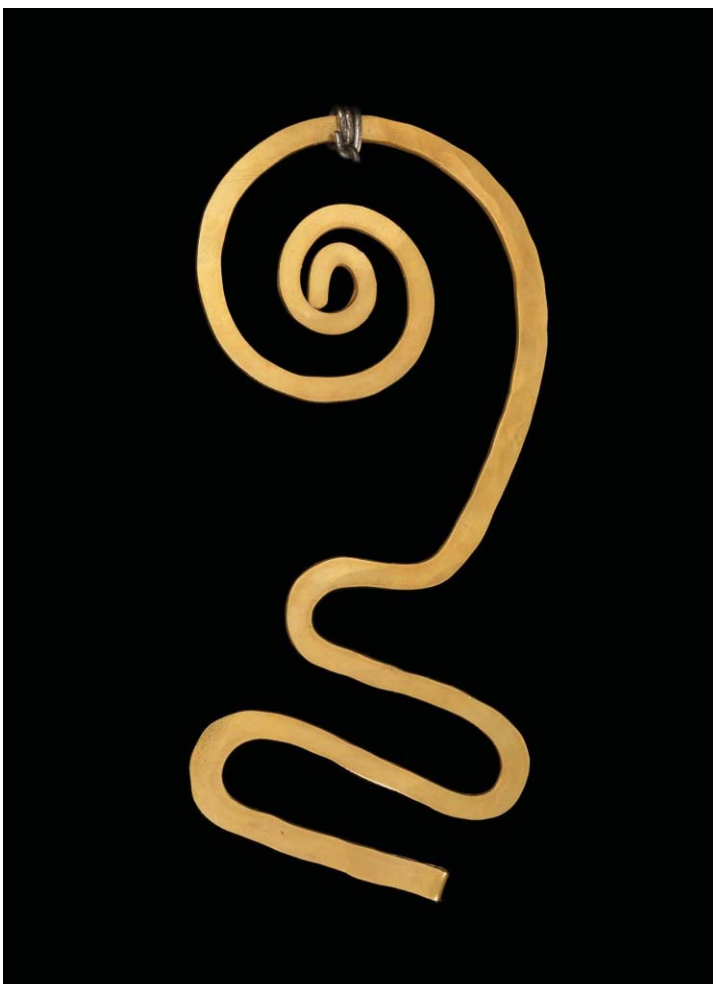
By the 1940s, Calder had found a staunch supporter in Marian Willard, whose eponymous New York gallery was among the first to advocate for modern art, including sculpture and contemporary craft. Willard held two exhibitions of Calder jewelry in the early 1940s, writing, "These works of art are savage and deliberate and self-confidently sophisticated . . . This is a master modern artist's contribution to the history of fashion. For a world already in chains it is superb stuff."[3] As with so many early modernists, beginning with Picasso, Calder referenced ancient and tribal cultures in his work, especially his jewelry, a practice no doubt reinforced by his personal collection of African, Oceanic, and pre-Columbian objects. And he was an equal opportunity jeweler, using a range of material at hand to complete his pieces, including glass, wood, ceramic, bone, and mirror, set in round or hammered brass, silver, or occasionally gold wire. Calder's artistic progeny in this regard were legion, and "Crafting Modernism" includes work by J. Fred Woell, whose 1966 *Good Guys* pendant combines staples, plastic, and comic book figures into a work of social commentary, and Ramona Solberg, whose career was based upon the meticulous assemblage of found, often exotic objects from around the world into compositions of rich color and pattern.

Art jewelry did not come into its own until the 1940s and 1950s, and then only to a small, self-selected group of practitioners and collectors

The popularity of Calder's adornments among such artists and patrons as Georgia O'Keeffe and Peggy Guggenheim, and with the public, led to their inclusion in numerous exhibitions in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s, in locations as disparate as New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington D.C., and Boston. Despite the temptation to hire assistants who could produce more work for sale, he refused to delegate the fabrication of these pieces to others. Rather, he was an inordinately active jeweler, making some 1800 works during his most active phase from the 1930s to the 1960s, along with his other myriad activities. Shown exclusively in fine art galleries and museums, they established an electrifying new paradigm of what jewelry could be for those more interested in aesthetics rather than the intrinsic value of traditional ornament.

In addition to the primitive aspects of Calder's jewelry and his frequent use of found materials was the realization that jewelry could be sculptural in form. The concept of the mobile, introduced by Calder and so-named by his friend Marcel Duchamp, soon entered public usage and was seized upon

ALEXANDER CALDER
Untitled (brooch), ca. 1945
gold, steel wire
5 5/8 x 2 1/2 x 3/4"
© 2011 CALDER FOUNDATION,
NEW YORK/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK



SAN KRAMER
Roc Pendant, 1958
sterling silver, 14k gold, ivory, horn, taxidermy eye, coral, tourmaline, garnet
4 ¾ x 2 ¼ x ¾"
COLLECTION MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN
PHOTO: JOHN BIGELOW TAYLOR

with particular enthusiasm by jewelers like Art Smith, whose work often included biomorphic pendants, and Ed Weiner whose pendant earrings were described as having "certain amoeba shapes that tell of Calder."[4] California sculptor Claire Falkenstein also created jewelry that incorporated this design element, which in turn influenced the sculptor Irena Brynner to become a jeweler. Upon seeing Falkenstein's work in 1949, Brynner recalled, [there was] "a band, a silver band, and here hung a completely free . . . mobile. And I thought, my God, but that is sculpture! I don't have to go away from sculpture, I just will change the size and approach, and it has to be in relation to the human body! That was a revelation to me."[5]

During the 1940s, a growing number of artists from the fine arts world began to express themselves in jewelry. Whether this was inspired by Calder's success or for other reasons is unclear. However, in exhibiting jewelry alongside sculptural work, Calder disregarded the vexing historic divide between the fine and applied arts that has often discouraged painters and sculptors from experimenting in craft media. His example may have encouraged others to explore what Toni Greenbaum has so eloquently called "the intimate art."[6]

By 1946, when the Museum of Modern Art mounted the exhibition "Modern Handmade Jewelry," Calder was joined by painter Richard Pousette-Dart, and sculptors José de Rivera, Harry Bertoia, and Jacques Lipchitz. De Rivera established the sculpture department at Yale University, and created large-scale works while also making delicate, highly polished, attenuated ornaments of stainless steel that he described in 1947 to his sister-in-law, Elva Ruiz, as "sculpture brooches." He added, "I hope that you will like the shapes and wear them—also that they will give you some pleasure."[7] Sculpture was also a defining aspect in the work of Margaret de Patta, who studied in Chicago with constructivist László Moholy-Nagy, and soon developed an impressive body of ornament featuring biomorphic and abstract compositions.

Objects in MoMA's exhibition were crafted of an array of materials, including "brass, chrome-nickel steel, plastic, native stones, marbles, pebbles, red, yellow and green jacks, and even safety pins," proving the growing influence of Calder and such Dadaists as Marcel Duchamp in driving the use of found materials in modern jewelry.[8] Found objects made their most spectacular appearance in the celebrated "necklace with strainer and clips," created by Anni Albers and Alexander Reed as part of a series of ornaments that they produced at Black Mountain College using off-the-shelf goods such as bobby pins and washers.[9] The freedom to virtually create something from nothing as demonstrated by Albers and Reed released a flood of exploration and experimentation that has continued to the present. Their work stood in strong contrast to that of practicing metalsmiths and jewelers in the exhibition, such as Adda Husted Anderson, Paul Lobel, Hurst and Kingsbury, and former Tiffany designer Izabel M. Coles, who worked in an abstract mode that was nevertheless strongly rooted in a metalsmithing tradition.

The freedom to virtually create something from nothing as demonstrated by Albers and Reed released a flood of exploration and experimentation that has continued to the present.

With the rise of interest in the subconscious, a result of both Freudian and Jungian psychology, and the concurrent development of surrealism, midcentury jewelers also found much to emulate, tapping into the talismanic quality of ornaments. Of the surrealists, who included Yves Tanguy, René Magritte, and Salvador Dalí, it was Dalí who, in addition to his work as a painter and sculptor, found expression in jewelry. The jeweler Carlos Alemany executed Dalí's works, which include his famous melting watch (*The Persistence of Memory,* 1949) and *Ruby Lips Brooch* (1949), some related to his paintings. Many of Dalí's ornaments quickly became icons of their time and remain so to this day. Among American jewelers, Sam Kramer was most powerfully influenced by surrealism; he produced a taxidermy eye brooch that was perhaps made in homage to Dalí's *Eye of Time* (1941). Kramer's *Roc Pendant*, with its melted silver blobs and ambivalent form, zoomorphic or anthropomorphic depending upon one's viewpoint, allows for multivalent interpretations, a key aspect of surrealism. Kramer expanded upon his love of

RICHARD
POUSETTE-DART
Untitled, ca. 1945
brass
5 x 2 x ¼"
PHOTO: ED WATKINS

JOSE DE CREEFT
Pendant, ca. 1965
gold, dental wax
3 ½ x 2 ⅓ x ½"
PHOTO: ED WATKINS

surrealism by devising an unsettling gallery setting that sent some customers screaming for the door. That was fine with the artist, who said about his work: "Some people may say work like this is disquieting and has a quality deep-rooted and uncivilized, like fetishes and amulets. Well, why not? It is just another aspect of the new medium of jewelry that offers the artist one of the richest and most rewarding environments for his own kind of expression."[10]

Similarly, the Spanish-born sculptor José de Creeft, best known for his direct, naive carvings of figurative stone sculptures, experimented with jewelry late in his life.[11] De Creeft made a small series of portrait pendants that were alternately introspective and startling in appearance. He worked with dental gold and wax, the gift of a patron, to fashion pendant portrait heads of withdrawn figures, lost in contemplation, some of them ornamented with semiprecious stones. Meanwhile, the artist, known for his playfulness, also created strange, mask-like heads with staring eyes and fang-like projections out of avocado pits and rhinestones that might have looked at home in Kramer's shop.

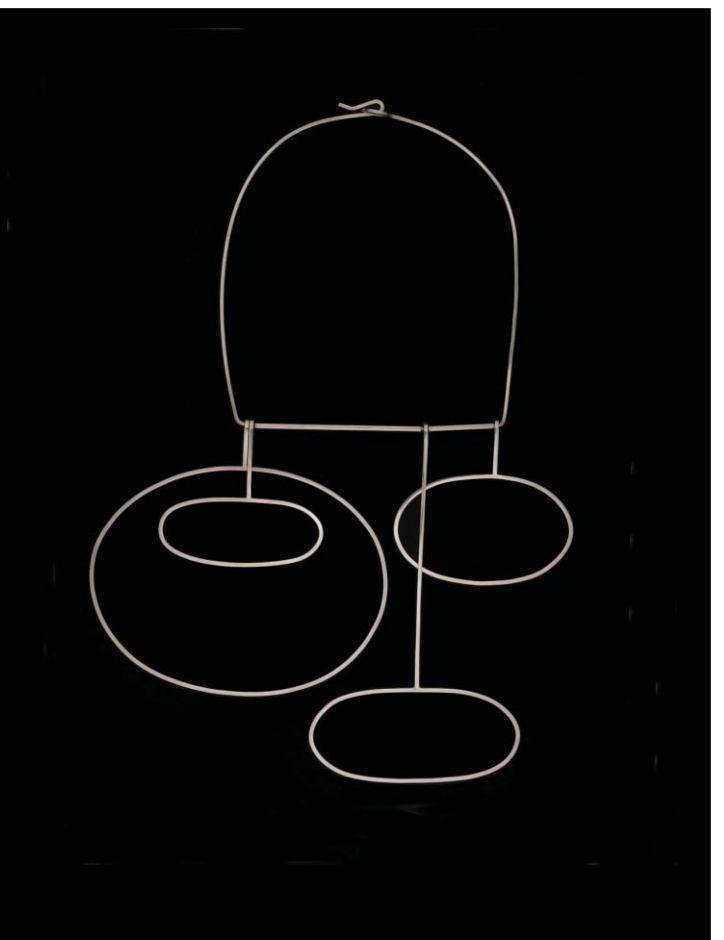
The irregular biomorphic shapes favored by surrealists had the effect of catching the viewer off-balance, calling up strange, expressive, and phantasmagorical primordial creatures, real or imagined. They found favor with jewelers like Kramer, Ed Wiener, and Art Smith, who cast eccentric shapes, or cut them from sheet metal, soldering them one over the other, sometimes with oddly shaped holes to create interest and add volume.

The search for meaning in an increasingly complex and stressful world absorbed many writers and artists at midcentury. The wide-ranging philosophies of the Far East, the transcendentalism of Thoreau and Emerson, and the psychological writings of Jung and Freud, were synthesized by visual artists like Adolph Gottlieb and Richard Pousette-Dart into the form of archetypal signs and symbols. Pousette-Dart fashioned brass ornaments of idiosyncratic, hypnotic shapes that resembled his heavily impastoed paintings, but having a compressed graphic power. When first exhibited at the Willard Gallery in 1943, the objects were hung on the wall as works of art without any reference to their use as jewelry. Nevertheless, a small hole at the top of each appears designed to accommodate a cord, which would allow the wearer to feel the heavy brass forms around their neck, and lending credence to the term "sculpture to wear."[12]

"Modern Handmade Jewelry" was simply the first in a series of such exhibitions that blossomed in the 1950s and 1960s. The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis was next to document the groundswell of activity in this arena in 1948 with "Modern Jewelry Under Fifty Dollars." Thirty artists were included in this exhibition, seven of whom had participated

ROY LICHTENSTEIN
Modern Head, 1968
enamel, white metal
3 x 2 ¼"

BETTY COOKE
Neckpiece, ca. 1959
sterling silver
7 ½ x 10 x ¾"
COLLECTION MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN
PHOTO: EVA HEYD



in MoMA's 1946 exhibition, and none of whom, except for Bertoia, were sculptors. A rising generation of young jewelers made of the majority of participants. They included Betty Cooke, whose sure sense of line and spare geometry became a hallmark of her career.[13] The Walker followed up with two exhibitions in 1955 and 1959 that featured growing numbers of jewelers, many of whom were graduates of newly minted postwar metalsmithing programs. Similarly, the St. Paul Gallery (today's Minnesota Museum of American Art) initiated a series of biennial exhibitions in 1951 titled "Fiber–Clay–Metal" that provided a platform for emerging studio jewelers. The Brooklyn Museum held a small exhibition in 1955 with the title "Jewelry by Painters and Sculptors" that included the work of Claire Falkenstein and Richard Pousette-Dart, as well as early examples by Roy Lichtenstein, who is better known for his richly enameled and abstracted heads of the late 1960s, complete with Ben-Day dots that were a hallmark of his two-dimensional work.

Meanwhile, in London, Graham Hughes, art director of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and champion of contemporary silver, mounted a major exhibition with the Victoria & Albert Museum that introduced contemporary jewelry to a wide audience.[14] Called the "International Exhibition of Modern Jewelry 1890–1961," works by studio artists, sculptors, and commercial houses created a giant mashup in which the work of Lalique, C. R. Ashbee, Josef Hoffman, Andrew Grima, and Tapio Wirkkala, along with Templier, Mauboussin, and Cartier, was exhibited with a mix of American studio jewelers, sculptors, and high-end houses like Philip Morton, José de Rivera, Stanley Lechtzin, Tiffany & Co., and Harry Winston. It was the first brave effort to reveal the state of the field in all its breadth and rather messy variety. Regrettably, nothing like it has been attempted ever since.

It was the astute collector who recognized that the adornments produced by this vanguard group were comparable to other art forms.

The 1967 exhibition at MoMA, "Jewelry by Contemporary Painters and Sculptors," was a full-court press of international artists ranging from Picasso, Braque, Man Ray, Salvador Dalí, Jean Dubuffet, Max Ernst, and Marisol, as well as largely abstract sculptors from the United States including Pousette-Dart, Richard Lippold, George Rickey, Ibram Lassaw, Louise Nevelson, Claire Falkenstein, and Lichtenstein. Nary a trained jeweler was in sight, an indication that the blurring of the divisions among the arts that was possible in the 1940s and '50s had receded by the '60s.

Jewelry by sculptor David Smith was included in the 1967 exhibition, although he had tragically died in a car accident two years before. Smith produced a small number of silver medallions in 1939-40, 1945 and 1956 that have the quality of ancient coins. The brooch illustrated here is adorned with two figures, softly modeled, and probably made in the

lost wax technique. Smith, who was fully conversant with forging, casting, and cold chasing, produced a richly worked surface of a seemingly mythical encounter between a man and a woman.

As the '60s drew to an end, New York gallerist Lee Nordness mounted "Objects: USA," a survey of contemporary craft in all media, which brought studio jewelry considerable attention.[15] This large traveling exhibition was formed with the assistance of Paul Smith, then director of the Museum of Contemporary Craft (today's Museum of Arts and Design). Among the highlights were some remarkable technical advances that led to new and exciting forms of jewelry: these included an electroformed neckpiece by Stanley Lechtzin and a hair ornament by Margret Craver in a revival of a seventeenth-century enameling technique called *en resille.* A wide bracelet by Hopi artist Charles Loloma demonstrated the artist's modern interpretation of traditional Hopi shapes and colors. Loloma, who had been exposed to Anglo aesthetics from his youth, had studied at the School for American Craftsmen in Rochester, and was acquainted with contemporary jewelers like Art Smith. The growing interest in body sculpture was perfectly captured in the work of Arline Fisch, whose *Body Ornament* was worn much like a chasuble on the front and back of the body, and extended below the knees. This exhibition introduced the work of a truly exciting generation of artists to this country and abroad as it enjoyed a lengthy European tour, and demonstrated the vitality of American craft in jewelry and other media.

It was the astute collector who recognized that the adornments produced by this vanguard group were comparable to other art forms. For them, the glitter of the great jewelry houses held no charms. As the art historian Blanche Brown said when she purchased a brooch in the 1940s by Ed Wiener: "It looked great, I could afford it and it identified me with the group of my choice, aesthetically aware, intellectually inclined and politically progressive. That pin (or one of a few others like it) was our badge, and we wore it proudly. It celebrated the hand of the artist rather than the market value of the material. Diamonds were the badge of the philistine."[16] Set in motion by Calder, Albers, and Dalí, contemporary art jewelry has grown into an active, vital field that seems to have no limits, and beckons beguilingly to a new generation of collectors and historians.

Jeannine Falino is a curator at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York.

This article was developed from a talk the author gave at SOFA New York 2011, jointly sponsored by SNAG and Art Jewelry Forum.

"Crafting Modernism: Midcentury American Art and Design" will be on view October 12, 2011–January 15, 2012, and "Picasso to Koons: Artist as Jeweler" will be presented September 20, 2011- January 8, 2012, at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York.

Furthermore:
www.madmuseum.org/see
www.abramsbooks.com

DAVID SMITH
Brooch, ca. 1956
silver
1 3/16 x 2 x 1/4"
PHOTO: ED WATKINS

1. Precursors can be found in art nouveau jewelry that featured such non-precious materials as horn and glass, and in arts and crafts examples mounted with stones chosen for their irregularities.
2. Jane Adlin, "Calder and Adornment," in Alexander S. C. Rower and Holton Rower, *Calder Jewelry* (New York: Calder Foundation, 2007), 177.
3. Willard Gallery press release, accessed June 16, 2011: http://calder.org/chronology/period/1937-1945/30. The first of Willard's two exhibitions, called "Calder Jewelry," ran from December 3 to 25, 1940. *New York Times*, December 8, 1940, p. 173.
4. Blanche Brown, "Ed Weiner to me," in *Jewelry by Ed Wiener*, Fifty/50 Gallery, December 1, 1988–January 7, 1989, 13.
5. Irena Brynner, oral history interview by Arline M. Fisch, April 26–27, 2001, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
6. Toni Lesser Wolf [Greenbaum], "The Intimate Art," *ARTnews* 88 (November 1989): 122–27.
7. Letter from José de Rivera to his sister-in-law, Elva Ruiz, 1947, as cited in Brooklyn Museum, José de Rivera, Brooch, accession no. 2008.73a-b, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/186471/Brooch, accessed June 16, 2011.
8. n.a., "Exhibition of Modern Handmade Jewelry Opens at Museum of Modern Art," n.d. Quotation taken from press release, Museum of Modern Art, exhibition records no. 46916-45.
9. For an illustration and discussion of the Albers/Reed brooch, see Janet Koplos and Bruce Metcalf, *Makers, A History of American Studio Craft* (Chapel Hill, NC and Henderson, NC: The University of North Carolina Press and the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, 2010), 187-88.
10. Sam Kramer, "Creating Spontaneous Jewelry," *Design* 53 (May 1951), 181, in Toni Greenbaum, *Messengers of Modernism: American Studio Jewelry 1940–1960*, (Paris and New York: Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts and Flammarion, 1996), 74. For an excellent survey, see Toni Greenbaum, "Bizarre Bijoux: Surrealism in Jewelry," *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, 20 (1994): 197–207.
11. Milton Brown refers to de Creeft, along with William Zorach, Chaim Gross, and Robert Flannagan, as sculptors "experiencing a return to the primitive, the naïve and folk art. The signature words were craft, handicraft, handmade, and in sculpture, direct carving." Milton Brown, "Ed Wiener, Craftsman/Artist," in *Jewelry by Ed Wiener*, Fifty/50 Gallery, December 1, 1988-January 7, 1989, 9–10.
12. The term "sculpture to wear" first appeared in the *New York Times* in 1972 as the name of a jewelry gallery that opened in New York City. See Rita Reif, "A girl's best friend was almost left out of it," *New York Times*, October 10, 1972, 40.
13. Cooke was not included in the Walker catalogue, as she was a late addition to the exhibition. See Jeannine Falino, ed., *Crafting Modernism: Midcentury American Art and Design*, (New York: Museum of Arts and Design in association with Abrams, 2011), 134.
14. For information on Hughes's influence, see http://www.thegoldsmiths.co.uk/collections-library/curator-collections/graham-hughes-(1926–2010)/
15. Lee Nordness, *Objects:* USA, exh. cat. (New York: Viking Press, 1970).
16. Blanche Brown 1988, 13.

Reviews

Parades and Events: The Work of Ned Griner 1968–1983

Ball State University
Museum of Art,
Muncie, Indiana
December 11,
2010–February 20, 2011

by Natalie Phillips

Nearly 25 years ago, Indiana-based artist Ned Griner ended his studio career in favor of teaching art appreciation classes at Ball State University. The small, whimsical figures that populate his 1968–83 series "Parades and Events" were stored away, unseen by the public for over a quarter of a century. Thankfully, these charming works have once again been brought to light, thanks to the curatorial efforts of BSU professor Patricia Nelson and the students in her Immersive Learning class.

Griner used small figures made with the lost wax casting process to create detailed reenactments of a variety of historical events and biblical scenes. From Noah's Ark and the Crusaders, to Emperor Maximilian's marching army and the Battle of Troy, Griner's sculptures draw from a wide range of subject matter. What unites them thematically and stylistically is their attention to detail and the intimate process of viewing such elaborate, multi-figured works. Their small size requires visitors to look carefully and immerse themselves in his small-scale worlds.

The popularity of lost wax casting has fluctuated throughout its nearly 4,000-year history. When Griner originally created "Parades and Events," the use of the technique had waned amongst academic metalsmiths in favor of materials such as hammered sheet metal. Griner's work originally premiered to mixed reviews, but lost wax casting is reemerging today, and artists are exploring its potential in modern metalwork. This exhibition is thus timely, allowing Griner's work to be reexamined and properly assessed.

Each of Griner's works features a multitude of small figures individually carved in wax and cast in brass, rather than reproduced through the use of molds, so that each maintains its own distinctive character. Though a complex, multi-figured arrangement showing figures in strict military ranks, *Hannibal* (1970) has a rare sense of individuality. Griner avoids mundane repetition by creating individualized features and variable poses for each soldier. Interspersed throughout the marching soldiers are Hannibal's famed elephants, which were a part of his cavalry as he crossed the Alps, adding further vitality and avoiding what could easily seem a monotonous procession in the hands of a less skilled artist.

Cathedral, 1977
brass, turned pine table legs, mahogany
31 x 20 x 3"

Similarly, *The Circus* (1969) uses the format of the procession to illustrate a traveling carnival. The parade of performers is led by a circus wagon, followed by a variety of animals ranging from giraffes to elephants, as well as humorous circus folk: a tall man, acrobats, jugglers, all in lively poses that add whimsy to this work.

A striking comparison to these more raucous pieces is *Into the Woods* (1979), which features a single brass figure walking into a sparse forest made from found wooden twigs. The loneliness and isolation of this piece poses an interesting contrast to the cacophony and jubilance created by *The Circus*.

Griner further mixes things up with *Noah's Ark* (1968). A retelling of the Biblical story, Griner's sculpture includes a variety of dynamic brass animals aboard a beautifully carved rosewood ark. Noah is pictured releasing a dove, which was cast in sterling silver to help it stand out from the other animals. The materials, in this instance, help the artist to tell the story of the work. A sculpture like *Cathedral* (1977) also uses mixed media; it features a symmetrical cathedral façade donned with brass figures of saints, angels, and members of the clergy in individual niches, much like the display of a traditional Gothic cathedral.

The Circus, 1969
brass, rosewood
5 x 3 ⅝ x 36"

The cathedral itself is built from mahogany and is accented with cathedral spires made of old table legs the artist found in a junk shop. These discarded elements are transformed by Griner into a beautiful, spiritually dignified piece.

"Parades and Events" demonstrates Griner's ability to transform a potentially static scene into something lively, personalized, and dynamic. The charming lost-wax brass figures in his work combine perfectly with his use of found materials and wooden accents to create a body of work that is reminiscent of children's toys, yet carries far more significant meaning. After all these years in storage, Griner's work is back in the spotlight, and "Parades and Events" is finally getting the attention it so rightly deserves.

Dr. Natalie Phillips is an Assistant Professor of Art History at Ball State University.

Courtney Starrett: RubberMADE

Winthrop University Galleries, Rock Hill, South Carolina
February 8–March 25, 2011

by Barbara Schreiber

Courtney Starrett's exhibition of recent work, "RubberMADE," paid homage to giddy mid-century American consumerism, but also hinted at the era's repressed emotions and the cultural tumult that would erupt by the late '60s.

The jewelry in this exhibition simultaneously celebrates and satirizes the marketing of domestic bliss. Numerous aspects—the materials (primarily silicone rubber), the titles derived from advertising slogans, the visual references—are faithful to the era. Individually, these colorful necklaces, bracelets, brooches, and rings are functional, wearable pieces, but exhibited together they constitute a witty social commentary.

At Winthrop, most of these pieces were displayed on custom-made plexi mannequins, torsos and hands clearly inspired by magazine ads. In a sly turn, the mannequins were slightly smaller than life size, so the jewelry often overwhelmed them.

Because the '50s and early '60s are familiar terrain—both beloved and maligned, variously susceptible to worship, contempt and parody—a project such as Starrett's could have easily descended into nostalgia or flippancy. But while her jewelry is deeply informed by this era, it is never completely beholden to it. The work has a strong contemporary feel. And while Starrett does employ humor, it is neither cute nor snarky.

Among Starrett's most successful pieces are candy-colored tentacled masses that look like sea anemones. Works such as the bracelet *The Sociable Choice* seem to be from an alternate universe, in which smiling women happily attach suspicious life forms to their bodies. Also in this cheerily off-putting vein is *Dependable as Sunshine*, a bright orange necklace that appears to be strangling its wearer.

Neck-o-Matic demonstrates one of the most effective contrasts between title and object. Both the title and the repetition of a single form hint at mechanical efficiency, but this necklace actually looks like a replicating, out-of-control virus.

Grape Jello, Lemon Lime Jello, and *Strawberry Kiwi Jello* are brooches cast in old Jell-O molds, so that the brand name becomes a prominent design element. These not only combine impeccable craftsmanship, formal beauty, and a bizarre perkiness, but also successfully bring together two disparate forms that Starrett favors: the gooey mass and the hard, industrial object.

In *It Doesn't Take an Expert to Grow a Beautiful Garden*, a set of floral rings embedded in box

Grape Jello, 2010
silicone rubber, sintered nylon, nickel silver
3 ¾ x 3 ¾ x 1 ¼"
PHOTO: ZAN MADDOX

of Astroturf, irony drops away entirely. Even a cynic should find the charm and sheer prettiness of this work difficult to resist.

The closest Starrett comes to a misstep has less to do with the work itself and more to do with the challenges of filling a large space with intimately scaled work. The necessity of calling out all the troops probably accounts for the inclusion of pieces such as *Built for the Future*. These sleek, space-shippy bracelets, while highly accomplished and true to the era that Starrett is exploring, appear chilly when exhibited next to the more pliable, organic pieces.

Complementing the jewelry is a wall installation of silicone flowers cast in brioche pans. Inspired by cheery wallpaper and spread across a large expanse in the boxy gallery, the installation is tasteful and appealing, but doesn't have the satiric verve of Starrett's strongest work. However, in a more constricted space, it would probably take on the slightly sinister tone that gives much of her work its complexity.

In the 1950s, labor-saving devices and modern materials brought a promise of liberation from household drudgery. But often the only liberation women experienced was the freeing up of time, so they could then bring competitive, mind-numbing perfection to that which were doing already. In this context, Starrett's jewelry can be seen as a meditation on a transitional period, in which women had more time, but little choice as to what they could do with it—a time of promise for the future, but still a constricting present.

Barbara Schreiber is an artist based in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Dependable as Sunshine, 2010
silicone rubber, grommets
45 x 6 x 6"
PHOTO: ZAN MADDOX

Set in Style: The Jewelry of Van Cleef & Arpels

Cooper-Hewitt,
National Design Museum,
New York
February 18–July 4

by Rosanne Raab

Pioneering techniques and designs executed with meticulous craftsmanship characterize the jewels, timepieces, fashion accessories, and objets d'art abundantly displayed in the Van Cleef & Arpels exhibition at the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt. In 1906, when the Van Cleef and Arpels families opened their boutique on the Place Vendôme, Paris was the international capital of fashion, design, and retail. Their family histories in the diamond and gemstone business provided the milieu for VC&A designers to showcase their virtuosic craftsmanship. Their *magasin* joined the ranks of the world's leading design firms, including Louis Comfort Tiffany, Fabergé, and Lalique, which had displayed their artisanry at the World's Fair held in Paris six years before.

Curator Sarah Coffin guides the viewer through VC&A's prime historical contributions to jewelry design by organizing the collection into six themes: Innovation, Transformation, Nature, Exoticism, Fashion, and Personalities. A video illustrates one of VC&A's numerous technical innovations in jewelry: the Serti Mysterieux, or the "Mystery Setting," patented in 1933. Matched gemstones are grooved for their T-rail channels of gold. The exhibition offers a rich array of gemstones incorporating this technique, including a sapphire boule ring, an emerald ribbon bracelet and matching earrings, and the *American Bicentennial Brooch* of rubies, sapphires, and diamonds.

The *Walska Brooch/Pendant*, 1971, a jeweled bird carrying a bundle (a 95-carat pear-form yellow diamond), transforms into an eye-catching pendant when the gemstone is freed from the bird's beak. Further, we see another variation of its segments occur with the removal of the wings and tail from the body, suggesting the magical, glowing bird from Stravinsky's Firebird Suite. The passe-partout gold necklace, embellished with a duet of floral clusters, converts into a belt buckle or, if preferred by the wearer, into a serpent bracelet. A page from the firm's special order book illustrates the progression of this design with gouache and ink colored drawings.

Brooch/Pendant of Bird
(owned by Ganna Walska), 1971
yellow gold, sapphires, yellow diamonds, white diamonds
PHOTO: PATRICK GRIES/VC&A

Egyptian Bracelet, ca. 1924
emeralds, rubies, sapphires, diamonds, platinum
Courtesy Primavera Gallery, New York
PHOTO: DAVID BEHL

The Arpels family's attention to research led to numerous distinctive motifs. A 1924 bracelet set with Egyptian figurative icons incorporates emeralds, rubies, sapphires, and diamonds. The yellow, gold, and green hues of the 1950s characterize the enamel *Peacock Box*. A Kashmir cigarette case, handcrafted in mother-of-pearl, black and green enamel, and gemstones, represents another design of great popularity in the 1920s and 1930s from the VC&A archives. A *Chinese Dragon Nécessaire* and *Magician Pocket Watch* add to the mixed cultural repertoire that inspired the firm's one-of-a-kind imprint.

VC&A established a presence in New York at the World's Fair in 1939, just prior to World War II. Their jewels were worn by many style-setters in American society. Grace Kelly received an engagement present of a pearl and diamond necklace, bracelet, and earrings commissioned by Prince Rainier of Monaco. Greta Garbo's 10-carat diamond and platinum ring and Marjorie Merriweather Post's tiara of Persian turquoise stones will certainly dazzle collectors of art jewelry.

Over the decades, VC&A collaborated with haute couturiers Cristobal Balenciaga, Elsa Schiaparelli, and Jeanne Lanvin, who created clothes that served as the ideal foundation for the multi-carat creations. The gallery includes a photograph of Helene Arpels, a former model, in a simple black dress (perhaps by her favorite designer Jean Patou) with two diamond clips at the neckline and a diamond bracelet on the cuff of the sleeve: the ideal of Parisian simplicity and elegance.

A splendidly illustrated and informative catalogue demonstrates Coffin's creative independence as curator of this exhibit (funded by VC&A). In spite of its commercial brand-burnishing, the exhibition engages your attention, with its label-free bubble vitrines designed by the Jouin Manku studio. VC&A enamel-lacquered butterflies appear to frolic in space in the glassed-dome conservatory of the 1902 Andrew Carnegie mansion that is home to the museum.

VC&A continues to offer its celebrated designs, including bows, ballerinas, and the ubiquitous *Alhambra* collection—just a short stroll down Fifth Avenue and your desires can be satisfied.

Rosanne Raab is a New York–based independent curator and lecturer.

Wunderwerk: Selected Works from Austria/ Germany: 1970–2010

The Philadelphia Art Alliance
November 9–28, 2010

by Jennifer Zwilling

TONI GOESSLER-SNYDER
Brooch or *Pendant,* 1979
gold, silver, amine-catalyzed resin
2 ½ x 3 ⅜"
PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART;
GIFT OF HELEN WILLIAMS DRUTT ENGLISH, 1986

Helen Drutt has been instrumental in promoting interactions between international and US artists since the 1960s, and has created a network of artists who learn from and inspire each other. Drutt contributed to the resurgence of jewelry making in the 1970s, which included artists, scholars, dealers, and collectors from all over the United States, several countries in Europe, and Japan. Many of those international artists have traveled to Philadelphia, where over the years they have engaged in a cultural exchange with the strong studio jewelry community present here. "Wunderwerk," curated by Drutt, showcased this particularly strong connection between Austria and Germany and Philadelphia over the past 40 years.

Some of the pieces shown in "Wunderwerk" can be categorized as part of the "New Jewelry" movement. The designation refers to the renaissance of jewelry making, beginning in the late 1960s and early '70s until the early 1980s, that grew out of artists experimenting with new materials, an international exchange of ideas, and an intense freedom of expression born out of the counterculture. New Jewelry in Austria and Germany was often manifested through a Modernist sensibility. Work in the show by artists in successive generations displays the artistic freedom made possible by the revolutionary nature of this movement.

The work of 26 artists illustrated the range of styles that existed within the New Jewelry movement in Austria and Germany as well as what grew out of it. The work of three artists represents a cross section of their work. First, Claus Bury stands as a paragon of what the New Jewelry movement meant in Germany. His work combines the precision of traditional jewelry making with the substitution of unconventional, nonprecious materials. Highly structured forms evoke long planning and careful construction, while bright colors and unusual materials provide an element of shock and surprise. The juxtaposition of these opposing forces makes each more effective; Bury transmits new ideas within the structured grace of tradition.

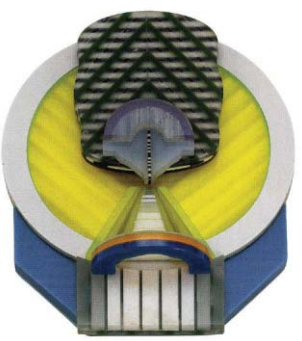
Toni Goessler-Snyder represents a melding of German and American sensibilities. Goessler-Snyder came to the United States in the 1960s and eventually settled in Philadelphia. Her traditional goldsmithing education in Germany, as well as an embrace of the free aesthetic sensibility of her new home country, are both evident in her work. She achieves a space-age romanticism through technical precision mixed with irregular textures and shapes that evoke lunar landscapes.

The next generation built on the freedom and modernity of their predecessors. While New Jewelry tended to reject historicism in favor of a modernist sensibility, younger artists have begun to use historical styles in new ways. Petra Zimmerman's work yields a fresh interpretation of the baroque style through loose, irregular forms that often culminate in pearlescent or sparkling ornaments.

The New Jewelry movement was a significant moment in the history of twentieth-century studio jewelry. From the technical modernism of Bury to Zimmerman's contemporary interpretation of the baroque, "Wunderwerk" illustrated that the shock waves started by that movement 40 years ago are still reverberating through the world of studio jewelry today.

Jennifer A. Zwilling is an independent curator of decorative art and craft, and teaches at Tyler School of Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

CLAUS BURY
Belt Buckle, 1971
acrylic
4 x 3 ½ x 1 ⅜"
Private Collection



The Genius That Was Lily Yung: Ahead of Her Time

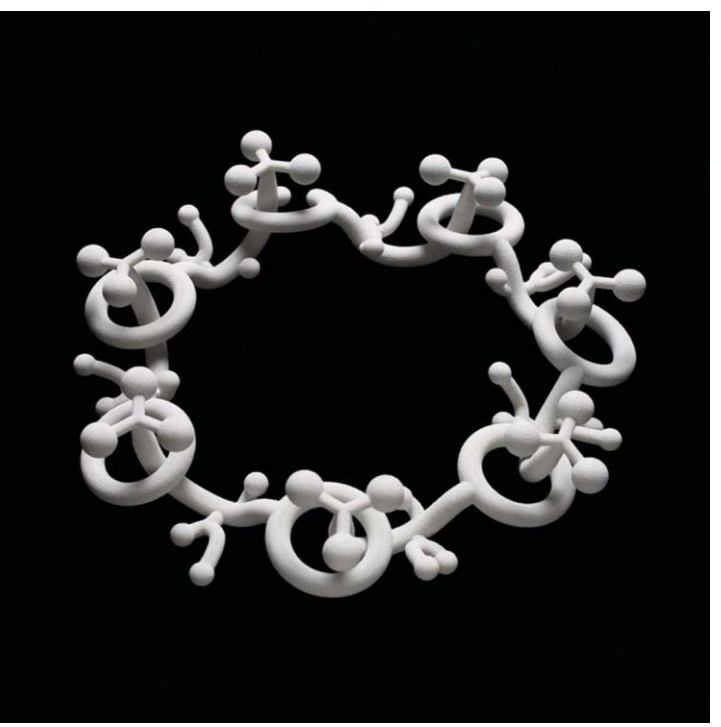
January 6–February 6, 2011
Ontario Crafts Council Gallery, Toronto

by Barbara Isherwood

The Canadian craft and design world was saddened by the loss of Lily Yung, who died in August 2010 at the too-young age of 63. Yung had a big impact on her community, both as a maker and as an advocate for fine craft. In celebration of her 30 years as a creator, the Ontario Crafts Council hosted a beautifully installed retrospective exhibition, co-curated by gallerist David Kaye, silversmith and author Anne Barros, and Ontario College of Art & Design University's Associate Dean of Design Beth Alber.

The opportunity to view three decades of Yung's activity highlighted the fundamental concepts that resurfaced throughout her career. Yung left the field of immunology to become an artist in the early 1980s, and several silkscreens from that period reveal a love of irregular pattern, bold color, and stylized forms inspired by biology (hints of her former profession?). A showcase containing her early plastic, bead, and wire jewelry bore witness to Yung's patient exploration of humble materials. Colorful, dynamic, and three-dimensional, these pieces are imbued with a feeling of lively movement that belies their synthetic nature. Earring pairs are balanced rather than matched exactly, demonstrating Yung's flair for the unexpected.

The "Pharaoh's Dream" series of woven brass wire and glass bead collars, created in the 1990s, brought the artist critical attention for her spectacular transformation of humble to precious, achieved through a fine-tuned design sense and meticulous craftsmanship. Seeing these inventive reinterpretations of Egyptian jewelry alongside Yung's laser-cut oversized rings in vibrant fluorescent acrylic highlighted her remarkable dexterity in balancing form and color in any medium. In pieces comprised of multiple small elements, such as *Pokotukawa* (2003), a beaded collar resembling veins or coral, Yung avoided visual overload by using a bold monochrome red palette and a strong geometric framework. Single forms in neutral colors, such as her massive bangles in various synthetics, are spiced with a pinch of the unpredictable: irregular perforations or a lop-sided angle. In *Bubbles* (2008), a black neoprene neckpiece of pierced circles, a few solid elements are scattered throughout, to break up the order.



Budding (necklace), 2005
Rhino 3D design, stereolithography with nylon and glass
length 22 ¾"

Ring, 2010
acrylic based photopolymer
variable dimensions

Given Yung's penchant for taking an idea as far as she could, her foray in 2003 into the realm of computer aided design and Rapid Prototyping was a natural fit, enabling the creation of numerous variations on a theme—though, as is typical of Yung, the element of the hand remained ever present. An unfinished version of the cast silicone rubber necklace, *Link,* still in its metal mold, showed the rough edges that she would have to file manually. Her striking felt neckpieces and hangings of streamlined snowflakes (appropriately Canadian!) were die-cut, then hand-assembled, some with stitched detail added. Seeing these alongside *Budding,* a 2005 neckpiece of fiberglass-reinforced nylon created through Selective Laser Sintering, one was struck by the power of Yung's mature style, futuristic yet rooted in the forms of nature as interpreted by a visionary designer.

A tireless experimenter, one of Yung's last projects was a ring crowned with stylized sticks, which she had manufactured in stainless steel and black and transparent acrylic-based photopolymer versions, to test each material's suitability.

In the last few years Yung had also returned to working with found plastic, transforming polypropylene tags into necklaces and bracelets of unexpected delicacy. Pieces are distinguished by different arrangements of interlocking loops, tags of various colors, or the addition of plastic bands in rainbow shades, or sequins. Turning the trappings of consumerism into jewelry is not an unusual strategy, but what sets Yung's work apart is the elegance of her creations. Sequins can easily look dollar–store cheesy, but in Yung's hands they are decidedly Fifth Avenue. A necklace of black tags has the sophisticated air of a little black dress, while one of clear tags and transparent pale pink and orange sequins could be an adornment for a high tech fairy. Through marrying mundane materials and consummate design Yung gave birth to exquisite hybrids, many of which were showcased in this fine retrospective exhibition.

Barbara Isherwood is a Toronto-based writer and educator specializing in visual arts.

L. Brent Kington

SNAG'S 2011 LIFETIME Achievement Award was presented to L. Brent Kington at the recent 40th annual conference in Seattle. Kington was a founding member of the Society of North American Goldsmiths and served as the organization's first president from 1970 to 1973, and director from 1973 to 1977. Unable to attend, Kington listened from a cell phone as former student Kris Platzlaff dedicated the conference to him in front of a crowd of 1,000 people, for his more than 40 years of significant contributions to the field.

L. Brent Kington was born in Topeka, Kansas, in 1934. In his youth, he had many supportive teachers who encouraged him to pursue a career in art. In 1957, he received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Kansas, where he studied with Carlyle Smith and Robert Montgomery. He continued his education at Cranbrook Academy of Art, studying with Richard Thomas, and received a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1961. He began his illustrious career teaching metalsmithing at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, immediately afterwards. A devoted educator for 35 years, he taught many of today's influential metalsmiths.

Kington's early work reflected his interest in cartoon drawing, with playful, kinetic toys and sculptures cast in sterling silver.

Untitled, 1993
forged copper, hickory
58 ½ x 15 x 6"

While attending the first World of Craft Council in New York in 1964, he visited the arms and armory galleries of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which led to a passion for working in ferrous metals and changed the direction of his work. He was intrigued with the level of craftsmanship of the ironwork, as refined as any work in silver or gold. He brought this passion to the program at SIUC and ultimately changed the practice of blacksmithing in this country. SIUC remains the only university to offer a MFA degree in blacksmithing.

Kington has an extensive exhibition record that includes venues throughout the United States and abroad, including a recent retrospective exhibition at the Southern Illinois Art Gallery in Whittington, titled, "L. Brent Kington, Mythic Metalsmith." His work is included in many permanent collections, among them the Philadelphia Museum of Art; National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; The National Ornamental Museum; Friendship Hall in Nakjo, Japan; and the Mint Museum of Art + Design. He is noted for his series of weathervanes, the "Icarus" series, and the "Croziers Crescents and Spires" series.

Not only was Kington instrumental in the founding of SNAG, but he was also director of the Artist-Blacksmiths Association of North America (ABANA) from 1976 to 1979 and trustee to the American Craft Council and the National Ornamental Metal Museum from 1976 to 1980 and 1987 to 1997, respectively. In 1996, Kington retired from teaching at SIUC. He currently lives in Mikanda, Illinois, with his wife, Diane, where he continues his studio practice.

For more information on Brent Kington's life and work, read the transcript of an interview conducted by Mary Douglas for the Archives of American Art, Nanette L. Laitman Documentation Project for Craft and Decorative Arts in America, for the Smithsonian Institution at http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections.

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BY DANA SINGER

Final night dance party at SNAG's 2011 Seattle conference

Work by recipients of student scholarships, clockwise from top left: Bifei Cao, Emily Eversgerd, M. Annie Kilborn, Heejin Hwang

Applaud the SNAG Conference

SNAG's 40th annual conference, "Flux," held in May in Seattle, entered the SNAG history book with a record-breaking 1,000 people in attendance. Thank you to the local host, the Seattle Metals Guild, our corporate sponsor, worldwide distributor of tools and equipment Rio Grande (for the sixth consecutive year), and the Bellevue Arts Museum, host of the "Exhibition in Motion" special event. Our gratitude also goes to the National Endowment for the Arts, Art Jewelry Forum, Herban Feast, Todd Reed, The Boardman Family Foundation, David H. Fell & Company, Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company, Catherine Morgan, KerrLab, Charon Kransen Arts, Artist Trust, the Tacoma Art Museum, and many others for their sponsorships of individual sessions at the conference.

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SNAG 2011 Educational Endowment Scholarship Recipients

The Educational Endowment Scholarships are SNAG's most prestigious awards offered to students. Beginning this year, SNAG also awards the annual Hoover & Strong Scholarship to a graduate student designing high-quality production jewelry.

The 2011 Endowment scholarships were awarded to Bifei Cao, graduate student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania; M. Annie Kilborn, graduate student at San Diego State University; and Emily Eversgerd, undergraduate student at East Tennessee State University. The Hoover & Strong Scholarship was awarded to Heejin Hwang, graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

***Metalsmith* to Co-Sponsor Studio Silver Event**

Metalsmith magazine and SNAG, in collaboration with The Museum of Arts and Design and The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, will be cosponsoring a symposium titled, "A Focus on Contemporary Studio Silver." The event, held at the Museum on November 10, 2011, will feature illustrated talks by Rosemary Ransome-Wallis, Curator of Collections, the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, and silver artists Rod Kelly, Jane Short, and Hiroshi Suzuki. For more info go to www.madmuseum.org.

Erratum

We regret that in *Metalsmith*'s Vol. 31, No. 2, a work in the Review of "Transpositions: Lisa and Scott Cylinder" was mislabeled and shown from the rear. Below is the proper view and caption:

Pearlican Post-Columbian Saxophone Brooch, 2010
brass, vintage saxophone parts, mother of pearl, epoxy resin, patina
3 x 2 ¼ x 1" (variable)

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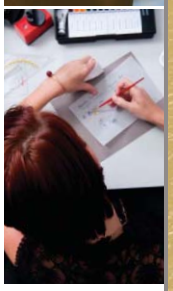

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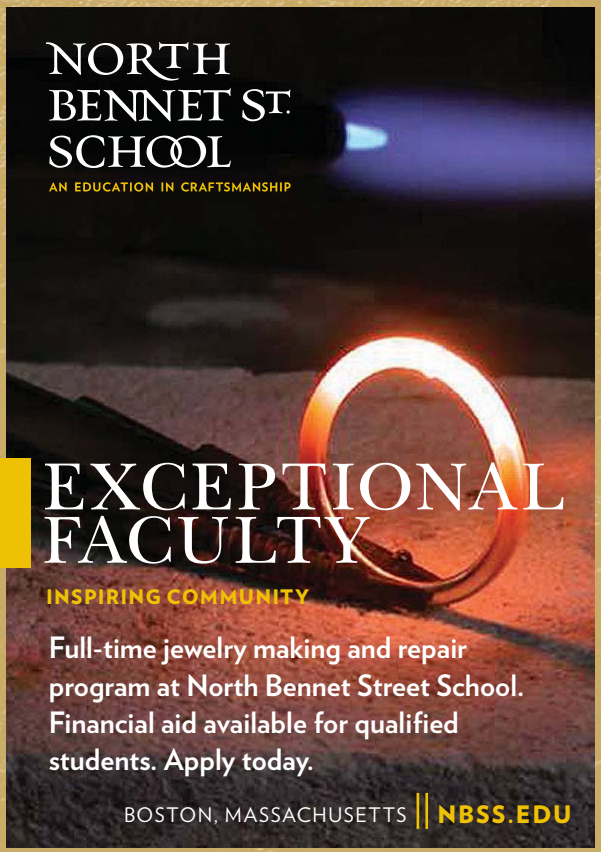
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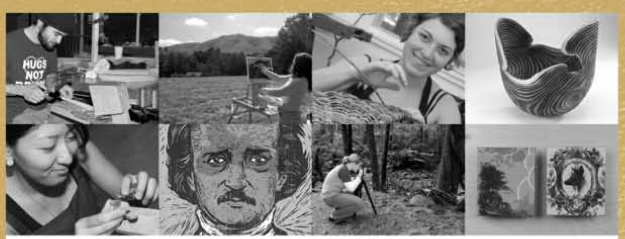

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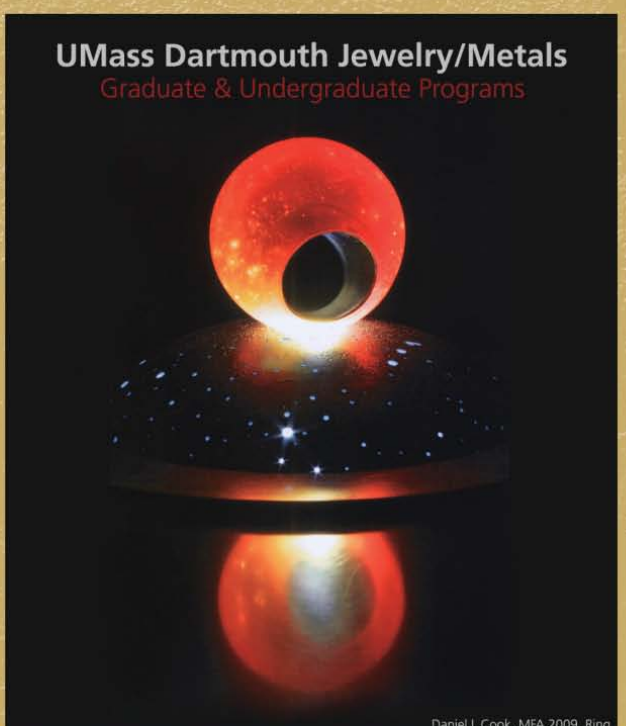

Daniel L Cook, MFA 2009, Ring

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Above: "Let's Party" by Betty Helen Longhi; photo by artist. Pendant; Sterling silver, niobium and pearls

Right: "Rivers and Canyons II" by Cynthia Eid. Sterling, 18KYG, and Rhodolite Garnets, 7" x 7" x 1" Neckpiece

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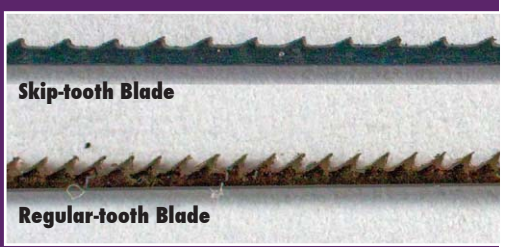
Small Burs

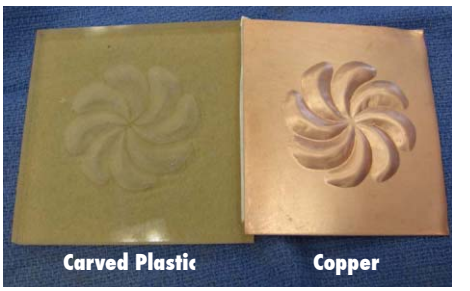
Large Burs



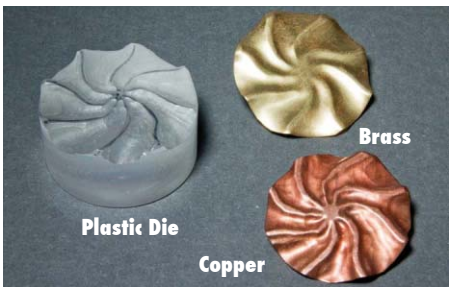
A couple of years ago, I asked the owner of Allcraft, Tevel Herbstman, about better burs for carving acrylic to make embossing dies. My students and I really like the burs he found for us—large coarse burs for removing lots of material quickly, and smaller burs for finer work as well. Though the smaller burs are coarser than typical burs made for metalworking, they leave a fairly smooth finish on plastics and waxes.

After years of experimenting with spiral blades, round diamond blades, and coarse jewelers' blades, I have found that skip-tooth blades are great for cutting plastics and waxes. Allcraft stocks them in a wide range of sizes—I usually like a #2 for cutting a simple silhouette die out of ¼" acrylic; a finer blade is good for a complex shape; a coarser blade is good for ripping through a big block of wax or plastic. The skip tooth blades feel easier to use for plastic and wax, because they have a smaller saw kerf—being a narrower blade, they remove less material. Also, with fewer teeth per inch, these blades move through the material more easily.

Plastic dies were used in a hydraulic press to emboss the metal samples shown. Urethane pushes annealed metal sheet against the die, creating a detailed design on the side of the metal next to the die, and a less detailed inversed design on the other side of the metal sheet. The metal thickness does not change much during embossing, which means that the metal is stronger after embossing—even if the metal is annealed, the formed metal is stronger than flat metal. Roller printed metal has areas that have been thinned, where a die (paper, feather, etc.) is pushed into the metal by the steel rollers. The second example at the right shows how changes in thickness and hardness of metal create different effects with the same die—thicker, stiffer brass is soft and fluid-looking, and thinner, softer copper is more crisply detailed.



Artwork above by Michael Foster. Artwork below by Cynthis Eid.



Carving Tips

Though it is possible to draw a design directly on the die for carving, I usually design on paper, then double-stick tape the design to the center of the plastic. The more material there is around the carving, the stronger the die will be. I learned this the hard way when I cut multiple designs on one piece of plastic and the die broke when I used it in the press. Similarly, the deeper the carving, the thicker the die needs to be.

At workshops, I teach students to start by outlining the shape, cutting through the paper design into the plastic. Then, remove the paper, and carve the interior. To keep control of the burs, I pull the bur towards me, working against the rotation of the bur. I carve towards an edge in the design, or along a line.

Marker test on plastic die

Acrylic die and earrings by Kiki Taron Kinney.

Finished embossed earrings

David Kinney

If the design has sharp points, I try to avoid cracks by finishing with very small round burs, so that the shape looks like it has sharp points, but is actually rounded. A truly sharp, pointed cut in the acrylic creates a stress point that is likely to crack. Rounding the point spreads the stresses, making a crack less likely.

The snowflake die by Kiki Taron Kinney shows that you can rub across the die face with a marker to create more contrast, making it easier to see the carving for further refinement. A quick way to check on the die is to press clay into the depression. When the clay impression looks good, you're ready to press metal.

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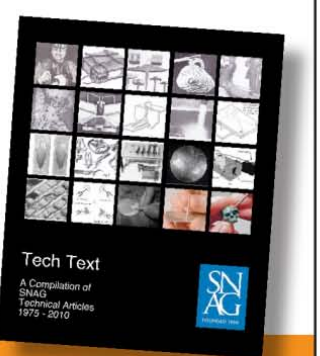

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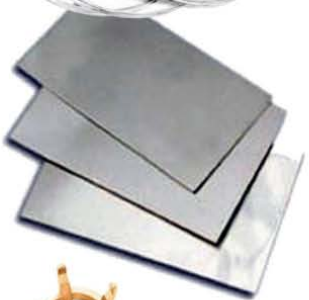

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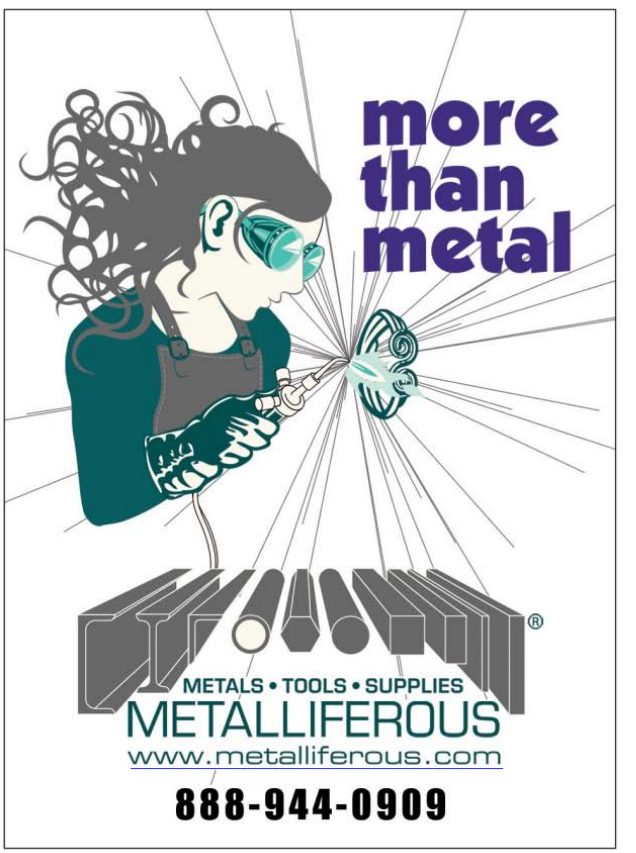

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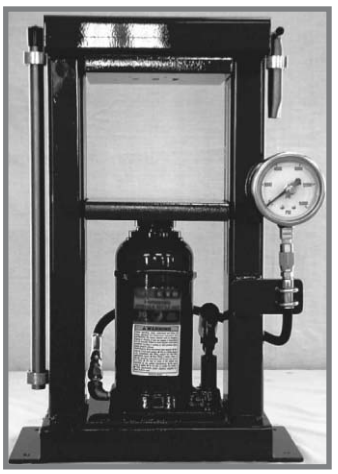

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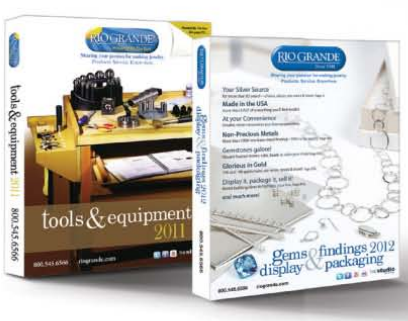

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